

The Brooklyn Paper

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CAUGHT IN THE SLUSH

Steve's scandal may push DiBrienza from Council race



Artist Sun Kwak is covering a Brooklyn Museum gallery in masking tape.

TAPE THAT!

It's a sticky situation at B'klyn Museum

By Aisha Gawad
The Brooklyn Paper

Who said masking tape was only good for putting up old Dylan posters? Artist Sun Kwak uses that prosaic household material as her prime medium of self-expression.

Over the next two weeks, Kwak will finish covering the Brooklyn Museum's fifth-floor gallery with her sticky new piece,

"Enfolding 280 Hours," a swirling mural made out of three miles of black masking tape.

So much tape is a big investment. One 60-yard roll, two inches wide, sells for \$2.99 at American Housewares on Court Street in Downtown Brooklyn, which says it typically sells the rolls one or two at a time, not eight dozen at a time.

"Three miles of tape? I couldn't even guess how much that could cost," said store employee Dwayne Dumont. "I don't even want to try doing that math!"

As a service, The Brooklyn Paper took out the abacus and did the calculation: Kwak's mural would require 88 rolls and cost \$263. Dumont said he's

See **TAPE** on page 11

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Ex-Councilman Steve DiBrienza is considering pulling the plug on his race to win back his old seat in the wake of a growing scandal over yearly, six-figure payouts from the City Council's so-called "slush fund" to the non-profit DiBrienza has run since leaving the legislature in 2001.

The former lawmaker's campaign tailspin began last Friday when the New

York Post reported that the Neighborhood Assistance Corporation — the shadowy Windsor Terrace group DiBrienza founded after his failed race for public advocate — has been entirely funded by \$1.19 million in taxpayer funds it has received from the Council since 2002.

The money is supposedly spent on youth sports teams and organize anti-

See **DIBRIENZA** on page 11

It's a crime

City makes good parker bad

By Ben Muesig
The Brooklyn Paper

The signs they were a "change" in DUMBO on Monday — just in time to nail a law-abiding driver.

Workers installed new parking signs on a stretch of Washington Street Monday morning, changing an alternate-side-of-the-street parking zone into a two-hour parking area, and adding in a "no standing" zone as well.

As a result, Iris Rios went from being a model citizen to a scoff-law at the stroke of a jackhammer and power drill.

And indeed, hours later, a bright orange reminder of city power was sitting on the windshield of her green Ford.

The price of his "violation"? One-hundred and fifteen dollars.

"It's not right," said Rios, a maintenance supervisor at a spe-



Iris Rios will fight the fine she got after the city changed signs in DUMBO.

GOOD BUY

Paper joins News Corp.



Brooklyn Paper Publisher Ed Weintrob addresses the staff after announcing that he had sold the paper he founded in 1978.

The Brooklyn Paper

The Brooklyn Paper has been bought by the Rupert Murdoch-led News Corporation.

The award-winning newspaper, which was founded in 1978 by Ed Weintrob and remained independent since, will become part of News Corp.'s Community Newspaper Group, which owns 30 community weeklies in the Bronx, Queens and Brooklyn.

"We are extremely excited to be adding The Brooklyn Paper to our group," said News Corporation Senior Vice President Les Goodstein. "We bought The Paper because we admire its attitude, its flair and its outstanding design. And we don't intend to change that."

The deal was finalized last week, and was first reported on Tuesday by the New York Observer.

In Brooklyn, the Community Newspaper Group also includes the Courier Life chain. Both Courier Life and The Brooklyn Paper will soon be housed

See **PAPER** on page 11

A PURIM MIRACLE

Rabbi fingers thief

By Evan Gardner
The Brooklyn Paper

Cops nabbed a man for repeatedly breaking into a Brooklyn Heights synagogue, finally delivering the congregation from torment by the burglar — and it couldn't have happened on a more auspicious day.



'CURIOUS' RABBI: Just after this photo was taken, Rabbi Aaron Raskin ID'd a perp.

suspect years ago when he came to the synagogue for charity.

Since then, the man has been breaking into the synagogue every few weeks and stealing charity donation boxes. The most recent crime was on March 4, cops said.

Not long after the arrest, Raskin received another call from the cops. "They said that the suspect wanted to talk to me, and that he was telling them he was my friend," said Raskin. "With friends like that, who needs enemies?"



HITLER, STALIN AND HIM: Dodger owner Walter O'Malley's name still lives in infamy.

Sympathy for the Devil?

O'Malley's son here to clear dad's name

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The son of former Brooklyn Dodger owner Walter O'Malley, perhaps the most reviled man in the history of the Western Hemisphere, will face down a borough still livid at losing its beloved Bums to Los Angeles more than half a century ago.

Peter O'Malley will make a rare public appearance at the Brooklyn Historical Society on March 21, along with Michael D'Antonio, the author of "Forever Blue," a new biography of Walter, and New York Times sports writer Richard Sandomir.

The junior O'Malley's participation in the Q&A is the equivalent of a circus ring-leader sticking his head into a hungry lion's mouth. (What a surprise; he didn't respond to requests for an interview to explain himself and his dad.)

D'Antonio's biography was the result of that ultimate Faustian bargain: in exchange for giving the elder O'Malley a fair shake, the family gave the author access to thousands of pages of previously unavailable family documents.

As a result, D'Antonio portrays O'Malley in a more favorable light than some diabolists may be willing to tolerate. Yes,

sports fans, he largely excused the hated O'Malley — whose name is typically listed with Hitler's and Stalin's on lists of the worst villains of the 20th century (though not always in that order) — for shipping the team to Tinseltown.

So here's the revisionist history (or should that be "his story"? O'Malley's decision to flee Brooklyn only came after he "spent the better part of a decade trying to build a new stadium" in Brooklyn, D'Antonio told The Brooklyn Paper.

"The Dodgers needed to be able to seat more people. They needed more parking. They

needed access to mass transit." D'Antonio says that the real scoundrels were Robert Moses, the master planner opposed to a new stadium in Brooklyn for Dem Bums, and an oblivious Mayor Robert Wagner.

"Wagner didn't take seriously the problems of the Dodgers or the New York Giants — and he didn't know what they meant to the city," the author argues.

But facts be damned: it was O'Malley, not Moses or Wagner, who went down in history as a sun-loving Satan.

Other baseball historians may need more parking. They

See **DODGERS** on page 12

Meet Brooklyn's other Beep

Bronx borough president lives in Prospect Heights

Brooklyn is one borough with two presidents. Our borough is home to not only Borough President Markowitz, but also Bronx Borough President Earl Brown.

The borough of Kings found itself with a double dose of presidents when Brown, then the deputy borough presi-

dent, ascended to the north-errmost borough's top job after President Obama named Bronx Beep Adolfo Carrion to be his urban affairs czar.

Markowitz, of course, is a staunch opponent of East River tolls and supporter of Atlantic Yards, while Brown, who lives in Prospect Heights

mildly supports tolls on city bridges and criticizes Atlantic Yards.

Is Brooklyn big enough for the both of them? The Brooklyn Paper's Mike McLaughlin asked.

Mike McLaughlin: Where do you live in Brooklyn?

Earl Brown: I've lived in Prospect

Heights since the 1980s.

MM: Were you pressured to leave your home borough and move to the Bronx when you became deputy beep?

EB: No, there was no pressure. My case is not unique. There has been a history in the Bronx of deputies not living in the borough. Fernando



Acting Bronx Beep Earl Brown actually lives in Brooklyn!

The bodega of the future — today!

By Ben Muesig
The Brooklyn Paper

A Greenpoint restaurateur is having a go at reinventing the city's most ubiquitous culinary standby — the corner bodega.

Cody Utzman, a former chef at Brooklyn Label and the man behind the popular Manhattan Avenue eatery Papacitos, showed The Brooklyn Paper his soon-to-open hybrid grocery that will merge bodega-style convenience with gourmet-quality goods.

"Bodegas are things that are so close to Brooklyn's heart — they are places where Brooklynites go two or three times a day for soda, cigarettes, tampons, or an egg sandwich," said Utzman. "We're going to have all of that stuff, but our spin is that we're going to be stocking local products, and everything will be made in-house."



Here's Cody Utzman's Brooklyn Standard Deli, which he calls "the bodega of the future." It's a nice place (note the chandelier!).

When the Brooklyn Standard Deli opens at the corner of Nassau Avenue and Jewel Street on April 1, the shelves of the 1,800-square-foot shop will be lined with bodega staples like toilet paper, chewing gum, and other odds and ends — as well as produce from New York growers, eggs and milk from an upstate farms, homemade bread, and prepared foods made in the shop's kitchen.

"A lot of these organic products are only available in nice restaurants or upscale groceries, but I want to bring these products down to a more pedestrian level," said Utzman. "The prices of these things usually exclude a whole class of people who can't afford to use them, but by preparing everything in house, we can charge a lot less."

For example, Utzman says he'll sell an eight-ounce container of or-

See **BODEGA** on page 11



Metrognome

Eli Rose, 11, attracted a lot of attention on Montague Street in Brooklyn Heights on Sunday with his newsbox antics.


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Blogger Robert Guskind dead at 50

Report: Drug overdose claims life of Brooklyn's beloved 'Blogfather'

By Mike McLaughlin and Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

Robert Guskind, the towering figure in the Brooklyn blogosphere who created the Gowanus Lounge Web site, died last week after an apparent drug overdose in his Park Slope home. He was 50.

His three-year-old site, which focused on — and frequently lampooned — real-estate development during the boom and bust in Brooklyn, was one of the borough's most widely read Internet sites. It contained hard news scoops and opinionated rants as well as the lighthearted, such as frequent photos of discarded couches.

Guskind's preservationist passions and tireless writing built up a vast readership and extended the Gowanus

Lounge's influence into City Hall and the executive suites of the city's biggest developers, who often found themselves as the blogger's target in withering broadsides.

The prolific blogger and journalist, who once wrote for the Washington Post, a Newark community newspaper, and even The Brooklyn Paper, had endured a chaotic personal life in the months leading up to his death.

He and his wife were separated last year after Guskind had an extra-marital affair, he told The Brooklyn Paper shortly before his death.

And in January, Guskind lost his "day job" at the Web site Curbed.

For years, he wrote about his struggle with heroin addiction in publications like Under-



IN HIS ELEMENT: Bob Guskind addresses the Brooklyn Blog Fest in 2007, when the once-small event was still in the Old Stone House.

ground Voices magazine. Friends of Guskind were concerned as early as last Monday, the same day that posts abruptly stopped appearing on his GowanusLounge.com and Guskind's regular Twitter blasts also ceased.

After another day of silence, Guskind's body was found on Wednesday at 7:19 pm, the city medical examiner said.

An autopsy was performed, but additional "toxic and toxicology" tests are being analyzed to determine the cause of death, said Ellen Borokov, an spokeswoman for the examiner.

On Wednesday, a week after his death, he was cremated at Green-Wood Cemetery in

a small ceremony for friends and family.

In recent months, Guskind had entered a dark period — one that was apparent not just to his friends and family, but even to his readers.

His postings on Gowanus Lounge had become more erratic — both in tone and frequency — in recent months, but Guskind maintained a large audience and was even courted by elected officials, such as Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights), who took the online muckraker to lunch in December.

"I realized that to blog was a part of the media landscape," Yassky said. "I was a reader and I was very much

aware that a lot of my constituents read his blog."

Yassky's district includes Williamsburg, a neighborhood of particular fascination to Guskind because of its rapid gentrification of the last decade. One object of disdain was the so-called "finger building," a tall, stalled project that earned its nickname because it rises like a middle finger among low-rise homes and apartments.

At the other end of the borough in Coney Island, Guskind also verbally lashed Joe Sitt, a major landowner who Guskind wrote was destroying the honky-tonk charm of the People's Playground by evicting carnie tenants.

In January, when the As-

traland theme park was being dismantled after Sitt did not offer a lease extension, Guskind wrote: "We can not think of enough foul expletives to fully describe our rage and contempt for what he is doing to Coney Island."

But because his blunt and pointed words were sincere, Guskind retained the respect of his self-professed rivals.

"We disagreed about almost everything he wrote about Coney Island, but there was never any doubt that Bob always believed what he wrote and genuinely cared about the borough of Brooklyn," said Stefan Friedman, president of the PR firm Kalkreuth & SSK, which represents Sitt's company Thor Equities.

Guskind combined his outspoken opinions with old-fashioned shoe-leather reporting. He roved the borough, usually lugging a camera and video equipment to create a multi-media experience on the Gowanus Lounge.

"I never got to meet Bob, but his blog helped me get to know Brooklyn and go from being homesick for the south to feeling at home here. I wish I had told him that," wrote "Katie Black" on a Web site maintained by Guskind's friend, Miss Heather.

Guskind is survived by his wife, Olivia Kissin; his mother Sally Guskind; and his sister Sharon Vitale.

AN APPRECIATION

Guskind's blog was the best

Lost in the confusion and pain over the death of Brooklyn's premiere blogger Robert Guskind last Wednesday at age 50 is something important to this old-media scribe:

He was a great journalist.

In an age of hourly deadlines and rapidly evolving media where reporting typically means merely linking to someone else's story or posting a city agency's press release, Guskind's Gowanus Lounge Web site was a wondrous mix of well-reported stories, lightning-fast updates, humorous asides and, yes, angry tirades against those who threatened Brooklyn's uniqueness.

He was a one-man assignment desk for every young journalist in the city. When we heard about his death, we did what Bob would've wanted us to do: we put aside our emotions and reported the story about his sad end.

Sad because reporting like Guskind's — real street reporting coupled with vibrant writing and institutional vigilance — touches readers, who connect with newspapers and Web sites that have a hand-made feel.

Where some reporters labor under the false impression that earnestness is the same as objectivity, Guskind pierced his targets with rapier precision.

His headline on the relatively minor news this week that the state had decided to end its closure of East River State Park poked fun at the bureaucrats' press release touting that the reopening one month early was arranged "just in time" for the warmer weather.

"A Small Victory for Frostdite," Guskind wrote, parodying the press release. "East River State Park Reopening Tomorrow!!!"

Similarly, the new Richard Meier building on Grand Army Plaza was not merely "the new Richard Meier building on Grand Army Plaza," but "Richard Meier's bird-killer" after he reported on residents' complaints that the glass-



Bob Guskind doing what he loved, covering an Atlantic Yards rally last year, camera in hand.

walled tower was a bird magnet.

And so the Decora, a building on North 10 Street in Williamsburg, was not merely a nondescript condo, but the "green bathroom tile building."

And a windowless building on Bond Street became "the bunker on Bond."

It's no wonder that last week, the Internet was filled with tributes to Guskind from an amazing cross section of new and old, journalists and readers — who appreciated what he did.

Many of his fellow bloggers, and even fewer of his readers, ever met him, but he made them feel at home.

"I never met Bob, but he was a friend to me whose kindness I will never forget his kindness," Deborah Matlack from Bay Ridge posted on The Brooklyn Paper's condolence page. "Not only did he cover all the news regarding the over-

development of our beloved borough, he impressed me most of all with his heart for animals. And he'd forget all the street cooches!"

Louise Crawford at Only the Blog Knows Brooklyn added that she was always "amazed at the scope of Bob's reporting" given his day job at a community newspaper in New Jersey and a freelance job with Curbed.

"I wondered, [how] did he have the time for all the top-notch reporting?"

We all did; the guy was everywhere at once — photographing a broken bike chained to a tree in Williamsburg, covering public hearings in Coney Island, meeting us for a few laughs and a drink at Brook in Park Slope.

His relentless pursuit of the truth contributed to a crushing stress he was feeling at the end of his life. Last month, after the Jewish Forward ran a story suggesting that the Park Slope Food Co-op planned to ban Israeli-made or -grown products, Guskind posted a brief story about the Forward piece — a re-blog, if you will.

At the time, I knew the Forward piece was wrong, but didn't begrudge Guskind his post. As a journalist, he knew that even the mere mention of an Israel ban would be big news.

But the problem was that the story was false. No ban was being considered. Though Guskind hadn't made a mistake — he merely reported what the Forward reported — he was dogged by a deep feeling that he had let down his readers.

"He was incredibly upset that he re-blogged that Forward piece," one of his contributors, Jack Scovergold, told me. "I told him that it was not his fault, but part of his response to me was 'I feel like s--- about that whole thing. I take no pleasure in drawing attention to a bulls--- story. And it is my fault.'"

It wasn't his fault. He was a journalist. It's not something you can turn off.

— Gersh Kuntzman

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Food fun time for just \$23

'Dine in Brooklyn' is back



Borough President Markowitz kicked off "Dine in Brooklyn" by saying hi to the staff of Dougies BBQ.

By Ben Muehsig
The Brooklyn Paper

Gentlemen, start your appetites.

The annual "Dine in Brooklyn" week starts on March 23, with 200 restaurants offering three-course meals for \$23.

As you might expect, the borough's most-famous eater has the knives out on this one.

"Dine in Brooklyn is more than just a great deal for foodies and 'chowhounds,'" said Borough President Markowitz. "It's also a delicious global tour without the cost of airfare!"

The big news this year is a brunch: two-dozen eateries are serving a two-person brunch for \$23.

True, some (including Brooklyn Paper columnist Mike McLaughlin) revile the breakfast-lunch amalgam, eateries including the South African restaurant Malibis in Fort Greene, Park Slope's Latin cantina Barrio, and the Dumas Park bistro Pomme de Terre will draw crowds for their curate version.

If you prefer your meals — and your deals — later in your day, visit DUMBO's River Cafe and Smith Street's Apartment 138, which received rave reviews from The Brooklyn Paper during past "Dine in Brooklyn" weeks.

For a list of eateries, visit Markowitz's Web site at www.brooklyn-usa.org/press/2009/mar9.htm.

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THE stoop

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

RED HOOK

Tanker full speed ahead

By Evan Gardner
The Brooklyn Paper

An ongoing project to restore a 71-year old tanker scored a big hit this week-end when volunteers equipped and started cleaning an all-important engine for the beleaguered boat.

Carolina Salguero, who runs the maritime cultural group PortSide New York, that is restoring the tanker Mary A. Whalen at the Red Hook Marine Terminal, learned about the 80,000-pound engine from a friend in Seattle, where one of the Whalen's sister ships was being scrapped. After a cross-country trip, the rusty power-plant is back in Brooklyn.

Salguero bought the machinery for \$5,705 and is quite happy with her find.

"One dealer I spoke to is asking \$7,500 for one piston for this engine," said Salguero, who noted that getting the aged engine up and running will still require a lot of elbow grease.



CLEANING UP: Volunteers from PortSideNY helped scrub and restore long-needed engine parts for the old tanker, Mary A. Whalen.

PARK SLOPE

Holy crapper! GAP toilet OK'd

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklynites, get ready to move to flushing!

The Landmarks Preservation Commission unanimously approved a site for the borough's first public pay toilet a little north on Flatbush Avenue just to the south of Grand Army Plaza.

"The Commission approved it because... the restroom would be installed at enough of a distance from the historical features [in Grand Army Plaza] and the entrance [to Prospect Park]," said Landmarks spokeswoman Lisi de



The city has approved this.

Bourbon.

The public, coin-operated, self-cleaning toilet will be part of an expansion in the city's franchise agreement with the Spanish company, Cemsu, which sells advertising on the units to underwrite their installation and maintenance.

One of the toilets is in Madison Square Park in Manhattan and the other is in Queens. There will eventually be 20 such units, though the one next to Prospect Park will not bear advertising.

A second toilet is being planned for Columbus Park in Downtown Brooklyn, as The Brooklyn Paper reported last month.

COLUMBIA STREET WATERFRONT

Residents: Put cap on Columbia

Neighbors want new building heights to be kept low

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Intense lobbying from residents of the Columbia Street Waterfront District prompted the city to include their silver of a neighborhood in a broader initiative to restrict new building heights in Carroll Gardens.

The two neighborhoods have been particularly vocal in their opposition to tall, modern buildings popping up among the diminutive skyline.

"We became concerned when there was a proposal to put an 11-story building on the corner of Sackett and Columbia streets," said Michael Webster, president of the Columbia Waterfront Neighborhood Association. "That particular proposal didn't actually get built, but it was a very strong warning of what could happen."



The city hopes to rezone the Columbia Street Waterfront District to protect its character.

The Department of City Planning, which already said it would begin a review this summer to cap new construction at 60 feet in Carroll Gardens, now says it will include the Columbia Street area, just across the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, in the study to determine which parts of the neighborhood will get the protective zoning.

"The goals for these areas are the same: update decades-old zoning with contextual zoning designations, establish height limits for the first time and curb out-of-scale development," said City Planning Department spokeswoman Jennifer Torres.

Webster told The Brooklyn Paper that the city indicated it will probably not alter the manufacturing zoning on

blocks close to Van Brunt Street and Red Hook's working cargo port.

A neighborhood-wide rezoning must undergo a comprehensive and time-consuming public review before it can be enacted, Commissioner of Borough President Markowitz, the City Planning Commission and the City Council will all vote on the measure.

FORT GREENE

Protest against Israeli dancers

By Ben Muessig
The Brooklyn Paper

There's a new front in the fight over the Gaza Strip: the doorstep of the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

About 15 pro-Palestinian demonstrators gathered across the street from the venerable Fort Greene music hall last Thursday to protest the Israel-based BatSheva Dance Company, calling for a boycott over the Jewish state's actions in Gaza.

Some ticketholders for the show by the well-regarded modern dance troupe argued that political protests should be reserved for political events — not artistic performances.

"They have the right to protest if they want to, but I don't think this should be boycotted," said Lindsay Weiner. "Dance is art, and artists should be allowed to express themselves."

Ticketholder Gerald Walsh said that arts groups could actually be the key to finding peace in the Middle East.

"It's so sad that inopportunities to be boycotting a cultural group," he said. "During the Cold War, developing positive cultural relations [between the United States and the Soviet



Anti-Israel protesters rallied outside of the Brooklyn Academy of Music last Thursday night to complain about an Israeli dance troupe that was performing inside.

Union) was considered a really important thing to do — I don't see why it shouldn't be the same in this case."

But protester Rykka Barzohar disagreed.

"Cultural events are political too — especially if they are being promoted and funded by the Israeli government," she said. "They are trying to use culture as a way of whitewashing Israel. That makes this a very political event."

The protest, filled with flag-waving, dancing and an a capella rap performance — was peaceful. There was a brief moment of tension when protesters stood in front of BAM's doors and distributed leaflets to ticketholders that looked like show programs, but were in fact pro-Palestinian pamphlets.

The brochure included a composite image of a dancer's ballet shoes superimposed atop a photograph of

a bomb crater in Gaza.

The pamphlet linked some of the protesters, who asked police to move the protesters to their barricaded pen across the street.

"They shouldn't be allowed to stand here," said Elise Annot. "They're handing out this thing that looks like a program, when in fact it's propaganda. They shouldn't be allowed to be so close — it's not fair."

After a discussion with police, the pamphleters returned to the protest area across the street — where demonstrators held signs reading: "Palestine — peace not ethnic cleansing," and chanted, "Our only course of action: boycott, divest and sanction."

There were no arrests at the protest, according to BAM spokeswoman Fatima Kaidie.

"There were no altercations," she said. "Everything was by the books."

The protest comes just days after a rumored boycott of Israeli products at the Park Slope Food Co-op sparked a controversy that was reported worldwide.

A spokesman for the BatSheva dance troupe did not respond.

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Kids mourn their skater pal

Teen died after chasing gang members in park

By Ben Muesig
The Brooklyn Paper

Broken skateboards, melted candles, flowers, cigarettes, hand-written letters and an adult inside the park in a fistfight sparked by a name-calling, friends said.

Paramedics transported the Henry Street adolescent — who was known to friends as a talented caricature artist — to New York Methodist Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

The death stunned friends of the shaggy-haired, light-skinned teen who aspired to become a graphic designer.

Xavierian HS in Bay Ridge, collapsed just after midnight on March 8 near Bartel Pritchard Square after he and his pals chatted with teens and an adult inside the park in a fistfight sparked by a name-calling, friends said.

Paramedics transported the Henry Street adolescent — who was known to friends as a talented caricature artist — to New York Methodist Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

The death stunned friends of the shaggy-haired, light-skinned teen who aspired to become a graphic designer.

"It's not right. He was too young to go to prison," said one acquaintance, who stood next to a simple and stark hand-written epitaph: "May 4, 1991 — March 7, 2009, RIP."

"I just kept feeling like if I had been here, things might have been different."

A parent of one of Abdallah's friends was also shocked by the news.

"It all happened so fast. He was at my house at 8 pm and now he's gone," he said.

The outpouring of tributes to Abdallah were not universal, however. People who live near the circle at the southwest corner of Prospect Park

have long complained about kids hanging out in the area well after dark — as well as occasional fights and incidents of under-age drinking.

The cause of Abdallah's death has not yet been determined — though friends said he suffered from a heart murmur.

Cops charged Angelo Bracco, 42, Eric Bracco, 18, Christian Bracco, 16, and Domers, Barbara, 18, with gang assault on Tuesday. An attorney for the suspects could not be reached by deadline.

— with Heather Holland



Friends of skateboarder Sharif Abdallah, who died early on Sunday morning near Bartel Pritchard Square, mourned his loss.

This cop sees it all go down on Union

78TH PRECINCT

Park Slope

Two men have been arrested for robbing a man's Union Street apartment while a cop was watching — on March 3, police reported.

The officer said he saw one man exiting the building, between Seventh and Eighth avenues, with a box containing three books while the other stood lookout around 11:25 a.m.

The two defendants claimed innocence. "We didn't do anything wrong," one said. The other was less sure: "I didn't do anything wrong," he said, according to police.

The other cheeks

A thug hit a man in the face with something — the victim doesn't know what cutting both cheeks on March 7.

The man was on Flatbush Avenue at Park Place at around 4:15 p.m. when he was assaulted, police said, though he gave few details to the officers.

Smoke free

The term "bumming a smoke" took on a new meaning on March 4 after a thief snatched the purse of a woman who offered to give him a cigarette.

The lady was on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Bergen Street at around 12:05 p.m. when she offered the man a smoke.

Instead of accepting it, he grabbed her purse and ran towards Flatbush Avenue, taking a handbag that included lipstick, various prescriptions and about \$100.

Dress 'n' ditch

A quick trickster nabbed a woman's wallet while she was trying on clothes at the Salvation Army on Flatbush Avenue on Feb. 26, the victim told police.

The victim put her bag on the ground while shopping at the thrift shop, which is between Sixth Avenue and Bergen Street. When she paid for the items at around 4:30 p.m., she noticed that her wallet, with \$250 inside, was gone.

Delivery despair

A thug ran off with a deliveryman's bicycle after displaying not one, but two, knives on March 2, cops said.

The 22-year-old worker was making a delivery on Warren Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues at 7:40 p.m. when the perp grabbed him and displayed the blades.

That was enough to secure the poor guy's \$300 bike, the police report said.

Twofer

A sneaky thief broke into two Prospect Place apartments on March 6, nabbing \$720 worth of jewelry and electronics from one of the units, police records show.

The thief broke in after 9:15 a.m., when one of the residents left. The perp and the woman's Apple laptop, two diamond rings, various gold pieces, an external hard drive and a digital camera, were gone when she returned at 9 p.m.

Police interviewed neighbor who had been home all night, but he didn't hear anything.

The same thief also broke into another apartment on the same floor of the building, which is at Fifth Avenue, but didn't get anything from this one.

Jewelry jack

The victim left her apartment on March 4, stealing \$5,450 in jewelry and electronics.

The victim left her apartment on March 4, stealing \$5,450 in jewelry and electronics.

A neighbor told cops that two men knocked on his door around 2 p.m. saying they were electrical workers.

Passport party

A thief stole two passports, among other things, from a Steinfeld Place apartment during a party on Feb. 28.

The victim said the theft occurred during a nighttime party for her daughter — who knew only seven of the 14 guests.

The apartment, between Fifth and Sixth avenues, was robbed on March 3 as a burglar broke into several office suites and stole more than \$200,000 worth of computer equipment.

Police said that at least one person dropped into the building, between John and Plymouth streets, by breaking through a skylight in the 11-story structure at around 2 a.m.

Hitting two offices on the 10th floor and another on the 11th floor, the burglar stole 15 computers, a printer, worth more than \$173,000, a projector, and other equipment.

There are no security cameras inside the building, but cops said that a motion detector was set off at 2:20 a.m.

Arrest by victim

Someone broke into a Pacific Street apartment on March 1, but he couldn't have picked a worse target — the owner of the apartment is a cop.

Police said that when the officer returned to his building, which is between Third and Fourth avenues, at around 5:40 p.m., the burglar was in the process of breaking in.

When the perp caught sight of the cop bearing down on him, he tried to flee, wildly swinging a hammer at the officer, police said.

A struggle ensued, and the officer pulled the perp, kicking and screaming, to the ground.

The hapless crook's afternoon ended in lockup, but an accomplice, who was not involved in the fight, was not caught.

— Evan Gardner

76TH PRECINCT

Carroll Gardens

Cobble Hill-Red Hook

Urine trouble

A man caught peeing in the front door of a Dikeman Street building on March 5 tried to sue the city for claiming he was looking for a place to go to the bathroom.

The victim of the burglary noticed a stranger loitering on the stoop of his residence

Police spotted the resident, a 48-year-old man, heard someone playing footy with the entrance to his building between Dwight and Richards streets at 1:20 p.m., so he opened the door.

"What are you doing here?" he asked the kisser.

Before fleeing, the foiled burglar said he stopped here to take a piss.

The tenant was peed off enough to call cops.

— Mike McLaughlin

94TH PRECINCT

Greenpoint-Williamsburg

Two-slay day

March 8 was a bloody day in Greenpoint, where gun violence took the lives of two victims. Here are the grisly details of the 94th Precinct's first murders of 2009.

An embattled former cop killed his girlfriend and ended her life in a deadly party after shooting, cops said.

Police suspect that Jerry Bowens, a 42-year-old cop who was stripped of his job after allegedly stealing drugs and cash from an undercover officer posing as a dealer, took his 28-year-old girlfriend's life at around 4:38 p.m. in a friend's apartment near the corner of Eckford Street.

After firing at the turned-in, the cop turned the gun on his girlfriend's pal, shooting her in the head and arm, cops said.

The victim, who is in stable condition, and Bowens turned himself in, police said.

A seemingly random attack claimed the life of a 25-year-old woman, who was shot in the chest by a minivan on March 8.

A gunman and an accomplice fired two shots into the passenger side of a Honda Odyssey that was idling on Anthony Street at around 11:20 p.m., striking the victim, cops said.

After the shooting, the crooks fled the scene, which was near Porter Avenue.

Super sweep

Thieves cut a hole in the roof of Associated Grocery store on Manhattan Avenue on March 4 and snatched a safe, cops said.

The crooks propped a ladder against the grocery store and climbed up the roof between midnight and 1 a.m. Once at the building, which is at the corner of Culver Street, the burglars drilled into the roof and heisted a safe from an office, police said.

Diamond ding

Cops nabbed three thugs who held up a 57-year-old man on Diamond Street on March 7.

The thieves confronted the victim between Driggs and Nassau avenues at around 1:20 a.m. and struck him violently before snatching his wallet — but police say they looked up all three suspects later that day.

Mac attack

A thief cleaned out a Lorraine Street apartment on March 5 — and locked resident out of his building while committing the act.

The victim of the burglary noticed a stranger loitering on the stoop of his residence

when he stepped out of his apartment at around 2 p.m.

Witnesses spotted the thief enter the building, which is between Conesey Street and Metropolitan Avenue, and deadbolt the front door.

Electro-nixed

Crooks pilfered a Newell Street apartment on March 4 and grabbed many electronic devices as they fled before 3 p.m.

The thieves got into the apartment between 8:30 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. and grabbed a camera, a satellite-guided digital mapping device, an iPod, a laptop, and a television from the residence, which is between Nassau and Norman avenues.

All's fair

A woman half the age of her manly companion allegedly stole his considerable valuables during a pre-dawn argument near the corner of Washington and Willoughby avenues on March 1.

The victim, 44, said that during the 5 a.m. spat, his 22-year-old gal pal stole \$100,000, a ring and a cellphone.

Police say they caught the culprit shortly thereafter.

Steal wheels

A thief got an easy steal, stealing a rented car from a guest at a hotel on March 1.

That such a crime could happen in New York City may not have seemed likely to the 30-year-old man from Georgia, who said he took a white Ford van between Fulton Street and Greene Avenue from 3:30 p.m. to 10:40 p.m.

Civic minded

Villains jagged a Honda Civic out of Cumberland Street overnight on March 1.

The economical impact, a 77-year-old woman, who said she left the car at noon and returned the same time the next day.

— Mike McLaughlin

his pockets. But the teen refused, leading to a scuffle in the streets at 3 p.m. The thief snatched the cellphone in the skirmish and fled.

Benzo out of shape

A rogue stole coodles of goodies from a parked luxury car on Washington Avenue overnight on March 3.

The late model Mercedes Benz was parked between Lafayette and Greene avenues from 5 p.m. to 10:50 a.m., the 38-year-old owner told cops. When the driver returned he said someone had damaged the car and taken a lady's ruby and diamond ring, an iPod, \$200 and a gift card for \$100.

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

March 14, 2009

Living the dream?

Want to open your own place? Might want to think again

By Ben Muessig
The Brooklyn Paper

As Caroline Bell serves shot after shot of espresso in her beloved Greenpoint coffee shop Cafe Grumpy, she often wonders one thing: if she knew then what she knows now, would she have given up her restaurant job to open her own cafe?

"I always thought it would be really great to have a coffee shop, but now I don't think that the romanticized image of it is true," said Bell, who opened the Meserole Avenue coffee-house with her husband in 2005. "If I had known it would have been this hard — if I had known the struggles we would have faced — I probably wouldn't have started it."

From espresso entrepreneurs and beer bar dreamers to high-top bakers and self-taught chefs, Brooklyn is filled with people who gave up their humdrum lives to live the dream.

But for many, the dream becomes a reality once the bills start piling up, the customers stop coming, and the novelty wears off. And in today's economic climate, it wears off pretty quickly.

From the start, it wasn't easy for the

GO INVESTIGATION



She works hard for the money: (Above) Caroline Bell, owner of Cafe Grumpy in Greenpoint, learned quickly that the romance of opening your own coffee shop fades quickly. (At right) Jamey Hamm, owner of Roots Cafe, worked 120-hour weeks when he opened in December.

then-enthusiastic Bell to open her shop. Brokers ignored her calls for weeks, and when she finally opened at the corner of Diamond Street there was one immediate

problem — a lack of customers. "It was a really big struggle," Bell said. "Both of us worked seven days a week, and we were sitting there the whole time, just waiting for people to come in."

Eventually, they did, and her Greenpoint shop has grown more profitable as the surrounding blocks have gentrified.

But even though business is going well enough that Bell is planning to open a third Cafe Grumpy location, she hasn't escaped from the coffeehouse grind.

"Running a small business in New York City means you always have to work hard," she said. "You just can't make a lot of money in coffee. If you had a lot of people backing you and a lot of support, that might be different, but if you are starting on your own, all of the financial struggles you have to take personally. You have a lot of anxiety. If something goes wrong, you have to take responsibility."

Taking responsibility means being in charge of everything from hiring and firing employees, to navigating the city's complicated web of permitting and licensing.

"A lot of people probably don't know this, but one of the biggest challenges is the paperwork — getting everything to fall into line so that you're allowed to open," said Michelle Giancola, who opened Root Hill Cafe in Gowanus with her brother and a friend last April.

"Even dealing with Verizon and getting our Internet service to work was a pain," she said. "You don't think about these little things, but it's a lot of red tape to deal with."

Opening a cafe also takes a huge investment to cover rent, insurance, and equipment (commercial coffee machines cost at least \$5,000). That leaves many cash-

Grumpy expands

The South Slope is about to get grumpier. Espresso entrepreneur Caroline Bell told The Brooklyn Paper that she will open a branch of her popular Greenpoint coffee-house Cafe Grumpy on Seventh Avenue between 11th and 12th streets.

"We're excited because it's really close to our apartment," said Bell, whose coffee joint is considered a shrine by java junkies.

"It's also our first location on a main street near a subway with lots of foot traffic. Seventh Avenue is bustling, but it has proven to be a dead zone for coffeehouses, with both Cafe Eleven and the Tea Lounge closing last year. Bell is optimistic.

"Coffee shops close when they take up a lot of retail space," she said. "This is going to be a to-go kind of place."

— Ben Muessig



Roots Cafe in Park Slope. Photo by Ben Muessig.

strapped entrepreneurs working long hours instead of hiring staff.

"The worst thing is having to be here at 6:30 am," said Giancola, who before opening Root Hill Cafe worked in film and theater — two industries notorious for their long hours. "I work all the time now. I don't sleep much anymore."

Like Giancola, Jamey Hamm can almost always be found behind the counter of his Roots Cafe on Fifth Avenue in Greenwood Heights. Hamm opened the place late last year and has barely gotten a break since.

"Some of the days are 18 hours days, but I definitely love it," he said. "For the first month, I was working 120-hour weeks. Now I'm down to 85."

Some dream. He's not alone in seeing the lead lining in the capitalist cloud.

Sarah Peck, co-owner of Otrine, has worked seven-day weeks since she opened in Prospect Heights in December, taking off only five days in four months.

"Quite simply, it's a lot of hours," she said. "I'm working maybe 60 or 70 hours a week. It's time-consuming."

Renato Poliafito, one of the owners of the sweet-shop Baked, abandoned his

See DREAM on page 7

Here's some good advice

Living the dream isn't easy. Opening a coffee shop, bar or restaurant can be stressful, tedious, and time-consuming — not to mention costly. But if you're going to persist in opening your own place, consider these pointers from Brooklyn entrepreneurs who have already trod the tumultuous path.

• **Get the right partners:** "It's really important that you have partners that are as committed as you are," said Michelle Giancola of the Root Hill Cafe in Park Slope. "That way, even when you disagree on things, you can manage to find a balance in the center. If you are going to have partners, find people who you are sure you can really work with."

• **Get the right staff:** "I didn't realize how important it is to have good employees," said Alexandra Kamenova of the Oak and the Iris Cafe in Kensington. "If you don't find the right people, they come and go, and they don't care so much about the business. That was the hardest thing to do — finding honest people who you can trust and who work well."

• **Get the right bank:** "Find a small local bank with a banker that you can have a one-on-one relationship with," said Sara Nabas of the now-defunct Lovelively in Windsor Terrace. "Really be careful with the bank that you involve yourself with so you don't turn out with completely inflex-



Renato Poliafito of Baked.

ible policies when you are operating hand to mouth."

• **Get serious:** "Make sure that this is something you really, really want to do," Renato Poliafito, a co-owner of Baked in Red Hook. "There is a huge difference in having a liking for something and working behind the scenes and making it happen. This is not like a 9-to-5 job where at the end of the day you go home and hang out with your friends. This is something you dedicate your life to."

• **Get ready to be poor:** "If you are doing it to change your lifestyle, be prepared to make nowhere near as much money as you're accustomed to," said Jacob Rubinowitz, owner of the Fourth Avenue Pub in Park Slope.

— Ben Muessig

EVENT

'Secrets' out

The Secret Science Club is finally ready for prime time.

The group that has mixed science and cocktails in its three years — and featured a few Nobel Prize winners along the way — landed Hayden Planetarium director Neil deGrasse Tyson to headline on Wednesday, March 18.

"He's just so fabulous," Secret Science Club curator Margaret Mitchellbach said of Tyson, who was once named the "sexiest astrophysicist alive" by People Magazine (can Read Pitt say that?).

Tyson told GO Brooklyn that the Secret Science Club would be a perfect venue to discuss his book, "The Pluto Files."

"It's not a science book, but a book about the sociology of science," he said. "It's about how people reacted to the demotion of Pluto. People didn't want science to change."

Demoting Pluto forced everyone to rethink everything he'd been ever taught.

"Everyone remembers the Solar System mnemonic: 'My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas,'" he said. "It's very hard to change that."

But couldn't it just be "My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nachos"?

"I don't like the restrictive view of the Solar System any way," he said. "I mean, most of the moons are more interesting than the planets and no one ever talks about them!"

Well, until Wednesday night, that is. Secret Science Club, March 18 at 8 pm at the Bell House (149 Seventh St., between Second and Third avenues in Gowanus, (718) 643-6510). Cover: \$3. — Garth Kuntzman

MUSIC

High notes

It's time to take opera out of stuffy concert halls and theaters and get it where it really belongs — in bars.

That's where you'll find Opera on Tap.

"We are the most casual opera company in existence," said General Manager Anne Ricci (pictured). "I think that our casual and interactive approach is what really sets us apart."

What better place to be casual and interactive than Freddy's Backroom, the beloved performance space and bar on Dean Street and Sixth Avenue that hosts Opera on Tap once a month.

"It's hysterical," said Mike Sternfeld, a Freddy's bartender. "Everyone's drinking, there's lots of screaming and opera."

Opera on Tap's "Cymbeline," 8 pm, March 20 at Galapagos Art Space (16 Main St. at the corner of Water St. in DUMBO, (718) 222-8500). Tickets are \$20 (\$15 for students and seniors). — Heather Holland

MUSIC

\$5 opera

You may have just lost your job — but the last thing you want to sacrifice is your opera tickets.

But next week, thanks to the Brooklyn Repertory Opera, you won't have to, as the mostly volunteer-run company offers the unemployed a \$5 ticket to "Orpheus and Eurydice."

It's perfect for the unemployed, you know, people like Brett Wynkoop, the opera's executive director. "I wouldn't [spend] \$15 for entertainment, but I would spend five bucks," said Wynkoop.

Those with a job, of course, will pay the still-low \$20 for Chicago's classic opera, which retells the myth of a couple torn apart by death and reunited by love (and Orpheus never even loses his day job).

And who better to play the Greek hero who could charm anyone (or anything) with his songs than Nicholas Tamas (pictured), whom Wynkoop says is "as good or better than commuters who are singing in the big houses of the world."

"Orpheus and Eurydice" at the Brooklyn Lyceum (227 Fourth Ave., at President Street in Park Slope, (718) 857-4816), March 20-22. Tickets, \$20 (\$10 for students and seniors). To claim your \$5 ticket, you must show a current unemployment insurance stub. For info, visit www.bropera.org/orpheus. — Emilia Brock

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HERE TO GO

EDITORS' PICKS

TUESDAY
March 17

Slope blues
The gravel-voiced Park Slope blues guitarist who once let a young Bob Dylan crash on his couch is playing tonight at Southpaw. Danny Kalb, who released his latest solo album, "I'm Going to Live the Life I Sing About," late last year, was a founding member of the Blues Project in the 1960s and has a prolific career that stretches back to jam sessions with John Lee Hooker in the 1950s.

8 p.m. "Acoustically Related" Brooklyn Southpaw (125 5th Ave. at Sterling Place in Park Slope, 718) 230-0236 \$10.

WEDNESDAY
March 18

De-planeted
Pluto's ignominious demotion by a cabal of scientists more than two years ago roused indignation across the solar system, but Neil deGrasse Tyson, the People Magazine-anointed "Sexiest Astrophysicist Alive," believes America's favorite heavenly body still has a place in the reshuffled cosmos. Why wait for Tyson to be on Colbert? Catch him now!

8 p.m. Secret Science Club with Neil deGrasse Tyson at the House (149 Seventh St. between Second and Third avenues in Gowanus, 718) 643-6510 \$3.

THURSDAY
March 19

Food fest
The creative geniuses who came up with the F. Martinelli deli on Court Street in Downtown (hint: the only meat they sell is Boar's Head!) want you to enjoy a full day of food, folk and fun — plus cooking demonstrations — to formally open their month's old sandwich shop. The place is excellent — and so are the freebies today!

10 am-5 pm. F. Martinelli (119 Court St. at State Street in Downtown, 718) 858-6000.

FRIDAY
March 20

Own Newman
It's a good day to kick off BAM's seemingly twice-yearly Paul Newman retrospective (can you blame them? The man is amazing). Anyway, today, catch the true blue Jew in "Long Hot Summer." But if you want a real thrill, wait until the next night to catch Newman in the greatest sports movie of all time, "Slapshot."

2, 4:30, 6:50 and 9:30 pm "Long Hot Summer," \$11 ("Slapshot" a March 21 at 4:30, 7 and 9:30 pm) Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. at St. Felix Place in Fort Greene, 718) 836-4100.

SATURDAY
March 21

O'Malley @ \$9.95!
He was the most-despised person in Brooklyn history. But tonight, Walter O'Malley, whose name is often listed just behind Hitler and Stalin as the worst villains of the 20th century, will be exonerated by his son, Peter, and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Michael O'Malley ("Forever Blue"). Want to really clear the O'Malley name? Bring the Dodgers back to Brooklyn, baby!

1 pm. Reading by Michael O'Malley and Peter O'Malley, Brooklyn Historical Society (128 Piermont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, 718) 222-4111. Free.

9 DAYS IN BROOKLYN

SAT. MARCH 14

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
BIRDWATCHING: Free. Noon. Prospect Park Audubon Center (Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, 718) 287-3400. www.prospectpark.org/audubon/

DISCOVERY TOUR: Meet birds and other wildlife, guided by a naturalist. Free. 3 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center (see venue info above)

PERFORMANCE
THEATER, "THE HIGH PRIESTESS OF DARK ALLEY": Mother-daughter drama by Jackie Alexander. \$23. 3 and 8 pm. Billie Holiday Theatre (1368 Fulton St. at Marcy Avenue in East River in DUMBO, 718) 209-3370. www.thehighpriestess.com

SATURDAY JAZZ SERIES: Hosted by Calley Elias. Free. 3-4 pm. Spike Hill Tavern (184 Bedford Ave. at North Seventh Street in Williamsburg, 718) 218-9277. www.spikehill.com

MUSIC, "GIANNI SCHICCHI": Regina Opera Company presents the Puccini opera. Plus opera excerpts. \$25 (\$15 seniors, \$5 teens). 7 pm. Regina Hall (800 10th Ave. in Dyer Heights, 718) 232-5555

THEATER, "A PERFECT WEDDING": Reading of Charles Mee's play presented by Brave New World Repertory Theatre. \$18. 8 pm. BBC studio (647 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place in Fort Greene, www.bbcstudio.org/bbcstudio/default.asp)

JAZZ: Ben Jackson's "Plucky Dabney." \$10. 8 pm. Brooklyn Conservatory of Music (38 Seventh Ave. between St. Johns and Lincoln places in Park Slope, 718) 622-3000. www.bbcmgm.org

ST. PETERSBURG QUARTET: Works by Mendelssohn, Shostakovich and Schubert. \$35 (\$20 students and seniors). 8 pm. Bargemusic (Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River in DUMBO, 718) 624-2083. www.bargemusic.org

THEATER, "BUS STOP": The William

SALES AND MARKETS
WINTER ANTIQUES MARKET: Free. 11 am-6 pm. (76 Frost St. at Washington Street in DUMBO) www.smokyle.com

RUMMAGE SALE: Free. 10 am-4 pm. Flatbush Dutch Reformed Church (890 Flatbush Ave. at Church Avenue in Flatbush, 718) 284-5140.

OTHER
FILM, "BEFORE NIGHT FALLS": Julian Schnabel's 2000 film stars Javier Bardem. Discussion follows. 2 pm. Brooklyn Museum (200 Eastern Avenue, at Washington Street in Prospect Heights, 718) 638-5000. www.brooklynmuseum.org

FILM, "DAY OF WRATH": \$11. 2 pm. 4:30 pm. 7 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, 718) 636-4100. www.bam.org

SUN. MARCH 15

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
TUNNEL TOUR: Explore the abandoned railroad tunnel under Atlantic Avenue. \$15. 115 pm. Meet in front of bank building (Atlantic Avenue and Street in Cobble Hill, 718) 941-3100. www.brooklynrail.net

DISCOVERY TOUR: See Saturday, March 14.

PERFORMANCE
THEATER, "A PERFECT WEDDING": 2 pm. See Saturday, March 14.

JAZZ: Quotient Arts Jazzensemble and calli/Yoel Nri. \$15. 3 pm and 4:15 pm. Parlo Jazz (215 Court St. between Myrtle and Park avenues in Fort Greene, 718) 855-1991. www.parlojazz.com

ST. PETERSBURG QUARTET: 3 pm. See Saturday, March 14.

THEATER, "BUS STOP": 3 pm. See Saturday, March 14.

MUSIC, "GIANNI SCHICCHI": 3 pm. See Saturday, March 14.

MUSIC, "OCH TALKS": Excerpts from Strauss's opera "Der Rosenkavalier" with narration by "Baron Ochs." \$20. 4 pm. Vertical Player Repair (Brooklyn Theatre 215 Court St. between Wyckoff and Warren streets in Cobble Hill, 718) 646-0666. www.vpr.org

THEATER, "THE HIGH PRIESTESS OF DARK ALLEY": 4 pm. See Saturday, March 14.

MUSIC, UNION CHURCH CHOR: "Requiem" by Gabriel Faure and other choral works. \$12 (\$8 children and seniors). 4 pm. Union Church of Bay Ridge (8101 Ridge Blvd. at 81st Street in Bay Ridge, 718) 745-0438. www.ucbr.org

SALES AND MARKETS
WINTER ANTIQUES MARKET: See Saturday, March 14.

FLEA MARKET: Free. 9 am-4 pm. Bay Ridge Jewish Center (805 81st St. at Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge, 718) 336-1103.

RUMMAGE SALE: Free. 12:30-2:30 pm. Flatbush Dutch Reformed

See 9 DAYS on page 8

CIVIC CALENDAR

SATURDAY, MARCH 14
Columbia Street Waterfront Association. Monthly cleanup. 11:30 am. Meet at 140 Columbia St. between Kane and DeGraw streets in the Columbia Street Waterfront District. E-mail bmccmcc@brooklynjazz.org for info.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15
State Senate Convention. State Sen. Daniel Squadron (D-Brooklyn Heights) hosts a town-hall style convention for constituents. 3 pm. Borough of Manhattan Community College (199 Chambers St., west of Greenwich Street in Manhattan, 212) 299-5565.

MONDAY, MARCH 16
Community Board 2 Parks and Recreation committee. Monthly meeting. 6 pm. Brooklyn Hospital (121 DeKalb Ave. at St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, 718) 596-5410.

Community Board 6 Economic and Waterfront Development, and Housing committees. Monthly meeting. 6:30 pm. PS 15 (71 Sullivan St. between Richards and Van Brunt streets in Red Hook, 718) 643-3027.

TUESDAY, MARCH 17
Community Board 10 Full Board. Monthly meeting. 7:15 pm. Newburgh Christian Home (1250 Old St. between 12th and 13th avenues in Dyer Heights, 718) 232-2322.

94th Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 7 pm. North Park Bank (804 Manhattan Ave. at Calver Street in Gowanus, 718) 383-0298.

TUESDAY, MARCH 17
Community Board 2 Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Monthly meeting. 7 pm. St. Francis College (180 Remsen St. between 10th and 11th avenues in Brooklyn Heights, 718) 596-5410.

Community Board 1 Public Hearing and Full Board monthly meeting. 6:30 pm. Swinger's Sixties Senior Center (211 Ainslie St. at Manhattan Avenue in Williamsburg, 718) 389-0009.

68th Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 7 pm. 68th Precinct stationhouse (133 68th St. between Third and Fourth avenues in Bay Ridge, 718) 439-4200.

62nd Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 7 pm. 62nd Precinct stationhouse (1925 Bath Ave. at Bay 23rd Street in Bensonhurst, 718) 232-2501.

88th Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 7 pm. Lafayette Presbyterian Church (185 South Oxford St. between Lafayette and Greene avenues in Fort Greene, 718) 875-6811.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18
Community Board 2 Land Use committee. Monthly meeting. 6 pm. NYU-Polytechnic Institute (31 Mott Street, at Broadway, 718) 596-5403.

Community Board 6 Parks and Recreation, Youth Services, and Cultural Affairs committees. Monthly meeting. 6:30 pm. New York Methodist Hospital (506 Sixth Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues in Park Slope, 718) 640-3007.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
Columbia Waterfront Neighborhood Association. Quarterly meeting. 7 pm. Jersey 315 Columbia St. at Woodhull Street in Columbia Street Waterfront District. (97) 432-0756.

To list an event in the Civic Calendar, e-mail Newsroom@BrooklynPaper.com.

Monthly meeting. 7 pm. 62nd Precinct stationhouse (1925 Bath Ave. at Bay 23rd Street in Bensonhurst, 718) 232-2501.

88th Precinct Community Council. Monthly meeting. 7 pm. Lafayette Presbyterian Church (185 South Oxford St. between Lafayette and Greene avenues in Fort Greene, 718) 875-6811.

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Maria Boeing cleans up at the Root Hill Cafe, another coffee shop whose owners work long hours to live their dream.

DREAM...

Continued from page 5

lowed ceramics when he quit his job as a web designer to open the Red Hook eatery.

"You have to really love it or you are doomed to fail," Poliafito said. "It becomes your life. You kind of lose your free time because your mind is always on work."

*Jacob Rabinowitz, owner of the Gowanus Bar Fourth Avenue pub earns less than half as much as he did when he worked as an attorney and campaign consultant.

"There is no way that you can make as much money in a small business as you can as a working professional in New York City," he said. "You can't even come close."

That said, Rabinowitz and the others will fight to continue living the dream. But for some Brooklynites, the sacrifices were too great.

Television producer Sara Nahas opened the Windsor Terrace coffeehouse Lonelyville in 2005 in hopes of finding a more relaxing profession, but she shuttered the Prospect Park Southwest shop last year when it had done just the opposite.

"The goal of opening the shop was to simplify our lives, but it ultimately made things more complicated," said Nahas, whose business was making even — but also bringing her to a breaking point.

Nahas had hoped that she and her partner would be able

to step away from their intense media jobs to run the shop — but Lonelyville was never lucrative enough for them to fulfill their dream.

"If coffee is what you care about and that's the driving force, then open a coffee shop. If you want to make a lot of money or have a social and relaxing job, this is not for you," she said.

Industrial engineer Alexandra Kamenova hasn't had much time to relax since she realized her long-held dream by opening the Oak and Iris Cafe in Kensington in August.

DINING

Baked (359 Van Brunt St., between Walcott and Dikeman streets in Red Hook, (718) 222-0345); **Cafe Street** (193 Meserole Ave., at Ditmars Street in Greenpoint, (718) 389-7623); **Fourth Avenue Pub** (75 Fourth Ave., between Bergen Street and St. Marks Place in Park Slope, (718) 643-2273); **Ortine** (622 Washington Ave., between Pacific and Green streets in Prospect Heights, (718) 622-0024); **Root Hill Cafe** (262 Fourth Ave., at Carroll Street in Park Slope, (718) 797-0100); **Roots Cafe** (609A Fifth Ave., between 18th and 19th streets in Greenwood Heights, (202) 246-2149).

"I went through all of my college years in coffee shops and I always loved coffee shops," said Kamenova. "I've lived all over the world and the first thing I did when I moved to New York was find a coffee shop."

The entrepreneur has been juggling her time between her full-time job and the bar in her Fort Hamilton Parkway cafe.

In the future, she hopes to dedicate herself entirely to the newly opened coffeehouse.

"I'd like to just run the shop, but I'm not making enough profit off of it to live," she said.

'Rent' comes due

High school production is cleaned up for kids

By Ben Muessig

The Brooklyn Paper

"Rent" just got redacted.

Some of Bay Ridge's youngest actors will be the first Brooklyn troupe to perform Jonathan Larson's acclaimed rock opera "Rent" — but they'll be staging a tamer version of the controversial Broadway play.

Students at Fort Hamilton HS on Shore Road are rehearsing "Rent: The School Edition," which eliminates dirty words and sexually graphic lyrics — plus cuts entirely the sex song "Contact" — from the Tony Award-winning drama about homosexuality, AIDS, and bohemian life in the East Village in the 1980s.

But just because this "Rent" is cleaner doesn't mean it's been censored, claimed director William Coulter.

"The harsher and more colorful language is removed and the more sexually visual songs are removed, but the relationships do not change and the issues do not change," he said.

Even though all of the f-words and s-words have been shorted from the Pulitzer Prize-winning play — the "f word" becomes "very" in many cases — Fort Hamilton students won't be slaying away from the play's R-rated subject matter.

Senior Jennifer Araiz will play a go-go dancer with HIV, sophomore Tyler Van Brussel will play a gay anarchist professor with AIDS — a triple threat — and junior Mark Diaz will play a transvestite who dies of the disease.

The young actors say they are ready to deal with the adult themes on stage — because they are already



No day but today: Students at Fort Hamilton HS in Bay Ridge will be putting on the borough's first rendition of the musical "Rent" — but a curse-free version.

'Rent' — clean or dirty

You can't swear in high school — and in most cases you can't swear on a high school stage. So here are some differences between the Tony Award-winning Broadway show and the student theater version:

Song	Original	School edition	Reason for change
"Maureen Tango"	"... it's weird, f—ing weird ..."	"... this is weird, very weird ..."	All f-words and s-words were nixed.
"La Vie Boheme"	"... faggots, lezzies, dykes ..."	"... homos, lesbians ..."	Slurs weren't deemed necessary to song's context.
"Contact"	"... sticky-licky-trickle-lickle steamy-creamy-stroking ..."	Song eliminated	All graphic descriptions of sex and drug use were eliminated.

dealing with them in real life.

"Homosexuality and AIDS are in the world, so if it's out there, we should be talking about it," said Diaz. "These things need to be accepted. It's important that we discuss them."

Coulter said he chose "Rent" — which is loosely based on Puccini's opera "La Boheme" — not only because his students can relate to it, but because they were already familiar with the show or its 2005 film adaptation.

"Did we choose the show here to create controversy? No. We chose it because it's popular with our students. They love the music, they love the characters, and they love the play," he said.

But just because the students love the play, doesn't necessarily mean that their parents felt that same way.

Additions for "Rent: The School Edition" drew about 125 students — a Fort Hamilton record according to Coulter. But that number shrunk to about 100 when students were asked to return a waiver signed by their parents — a requirement by the company that licenses the play.

"When my mom found out that I wanted to be Joanne, she asked me if I was sure that I wanted to play a character who is a lesbian," said freshman Tatyana Holliday. "She thought people might say I was a lesbian just because I was playing the role."

But actors in the cast of 40 claim they aren't concerned about the show carrying a stigma — especially because it has already sparked more excitement around Fort Hamilton's hallways than last year's rendition of "Thoroughly Modern Millie."

"There's so much talk about us being the first to 'Rent' in Brooklyn," said senior Maria Korneychuk, president of Fort Hamilton's Drama Club. "All of my friends — even the ones that go to other schools — are asking me how they can get tickets."



Big time 'Producers'

"The Producers" was one of the most-lauded shows in Broadway history. Now, it'll be the most-expensive community theater production ever in Brooklyn.

The 12-Tony-award-winning Mel Brooks classic will open at Poly Prep Country Day School on March 20 — the first time that the show will be performed in the city (besides Broadway, of course).

And because money makes the world go around, like the show itself suggests, The Ridge Chorale theater company needed a lot of it to put on "The Producers." With a budget of \$45,000 — which doesn't even pay for the

backstage coffee at a Broadway theater, but is an enormous price for a community theater — Ridge Chorale's production will have most of the trills of the original.

"The Producers" can't be done cheaply, the costumes are elaborate, the effects are elaborate, and the cast is large, so said the production's executive producer Karen Tadross. "We do things on a bigger scale."

Big and elaborate in this case means huge set design trucked in from Virginia and hiring a 22-piece orchestra. "The sets are very elaborate in this production they are almost as integral as the script in making the story come alive," said the production's director Jeff Samaha.

Yet Tadross and Samaha are quick to add that a bigger scale and budget doesn't have to mean higher ticket prices. At \$25 a ticket, the show is a nice retreat from a \$125 ticket at the production in Manhattan, which actually closes for good on April 22.

"The Producers" at Poly Prep Country Day School (9216 Seventh Ave., between 92nd and 93rd streets in Bay Ridge, (718) 775-9090) runs from March 20-28. Tickets are \$25. For info and tickets, visit jeffsamaha.com/index.html.

—Dustin Seplov



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MARCH RECOMMENDATIONS



These are Darrin's Best Buys for March!

Clos De L'Abbe Dubois Rose, by Clos de l'Abbe Dubois

Wish it was Spring and you were in Provence? A chilled glass of this chamer will almost take you there! Great with a roasted chicken, ham, cold cuts and salads or a simple sandwich, this delicious is a hint of the warm climate it comes from. What a lovely bouquet!



Rose Row Sauvignon Blanc, by Marie Niel Durt

We were absolutely delighted to discover this range of wines from the Southwest of France: delicious, well-balanced and priced so well! This sauvignon is dry and crisp with mouth watering ripe pear and apple flavors. This is a great "food wine"!



Sur Malbec-Cabernet Sauvignon, by Bodega Sur

Argentina brings us another winner! Our friend Mickey Vail lives in Argentina and finds some some of our best tasting Best Buys for us! Here is a blend of Argentina's two most important grapes, both originally from Bordeaux, making a wine that is a terrific match with steaks, burgers, roasts, stews, pasta, pizza and a full flavored cheeses. Smooth, rich and full bodied!



Oxford Landing Shiraz, by Oxford Landing Estates

Everybody seems to love a good Shiraz! Flavors of ripe blackberries and hint of cracked peppercorns... all that and a lot more will be going on in your glass when you open a bottle of this best selling Shiraz. Big and bold, yet not hot or heavy, this one is just right on a chilly night!



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Darrin's March Discovery Wines!



Wilfred Rousse Chino Les Puy, by Wilfrid Rousse

\$18.95



Te Awa Left Field Chardonnay, by Te Awa Winery

\$15.95

Buy my December Discovery Wines Two Pack and Save 10%

\$34.90



March Spirit of the Month

Pama Pomegranate liqueur, by Pama Spirits Co.

PAMA is made with all natural pomegranate juice, premium vodka and a touch of imported tequila.



March Cellar Selection

Gary Farrell Pinot Noir RN River, by Gary Farrell

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Maimonides Good Health Message #3

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER:

1. WHAT IS COLORECTAL CANCER?

Colon and rectal cancer share many features and are often referred to as colorectal cancer, a disease in which cells in the colon or rectum become abnormal. Most of these cancers begin as abnormal tissue growths or polyps. Removing a polyp early may prevent it from becoming cancerous.

2. WHO IS AT RISK OF DEVELOPING COLORECTAL CANCER?

Colorectal cancer occurs in men and women of all racial and ethnic groups. People who are age 50 or older have the greatest risk of developing the disease. Also at risk are those with a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, and those who suffer from certain diseases of the intestines, including ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease. A person who has already had colorectal cancer is at increased risk of developing the disease a second time.

3. WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COLORECTAL CANCER?

In the early stages, colorectal cancer tends to be slow-growing and usually develops with few, if any, symptoms. Eventual symptoms can include blood in the stool; a change in bowel habits; stools that are narrower than usual; or unexplained stomach discomfort, frequent gas, pains or indigestion.

4. WHAT IS A COLONOSCOPY?

A colonoscopy is a painless, outpatient procedure that enables a doctor to examine the entire lining of the large intestine with a flexible instrument called a colonoscope. If any polyps are found, they can be removed during the procedure. The whole procedure usually takes less than 25 minutes.

5. WHY IS GETTING A COLONOSCOPY SO IMPORTANT?

Colorectal cancer screening can detect the early stages of cancer. Studies have shown that the removal of precancerous polyps during a colonoscopy reduces both cancer incidence and mortality.

6. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I GET SCREENED AND IS THE PROCEDURE COVERED BY INSURANCE?

All men and women 50 and older should have a colonoscopy every 10 years. Although insurance coverage varies, most plans help pay for screening tests for people over 50.



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our listings at
[BrooklynPaper.com/
Nightlife](http://BrooklynPaper.com/Nightlife)



Pileup: Casikids play the Bell House on March 16.

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 6

Lunch (90) Hatbush Ave.
at Church Avenue in Flat-
bush, (718) 284-5140.

OTHER
TALK, "CULTIVATING EMPATHY": Jane Johnson Lewis
speaks about empathy
and ethics. Free. 11 a.m.
Brooklyn Society for Ethical
Culture (53 Prospect Park
West at Second Street in
Park Slope, (718) 768-9772,
www.bsec.org.)

**TALK, COVERING THE WAR
IN GAZA:** Eyewitness
news reporter N.J. Burkett
speaks. Brunch is served.
Registration required. \$18
(\$15 members). 11 a.m.
Congregation Mount Sinai
(250 Cadman Place West
at Clark Street in Brooklyn
Heights, (718) 875-9124).

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE:
The annual Park Slope
march in honor of Ireland's
patron saint. Free. 12:45
p.m. Prospect Park West at
19th St.

**READING, "BROOKLYN
NOIR 3":** Editor Tim
McGoughlin and select
contributors to the popular
story series. Free. 3:30 p.m.
Brooklyn Museum
200 Eastern Pkwy. at Wash-
ington Avenue in Prospect
Heights, (718) 638-4000,
www.brooklynmuseum.org.)

FILM, "DAY OF WRATH": 2
p.m., 4:30 p.m., 6:50 p.m., 9:15
p.m. See Sat. March 14.

ART OPENING: Fence
Pussy, the lesbian public
art collective, presents a
retrospective. Free. 5-7 p.m.
Lesbian History Archives
(484 14th St. between
Eight Avenue and Prospect
Park West in Park Slope,
718-768-3953; www.lesbianhistoryarchives.org.)

MON, MARCH 16
**READING, TONY BARLOW
AND CHARLES BOK:**
Authors of "Sharp Teeth"
and "Beautiful Children."
Free. 7 p.m. BookCourt (163 Court
St. between Pacific and
Dean streets in Cobble
Hill, (718) 875-3677; www.bookcourt.org.)

FILM, "THE PRESIDENT": 11
p.m. Brooklyn Academy
of Music (30 Lafayette Ave.
near St. Felix Street in Fort
Greene, (718) 636-4100,
www.bam.org.)

TUES, MARCH 17
**READING, HANNAH
JEANIK:** Author of poetry
collection, "Circa." Free. 7
p.m. BookCourt (163 Court
St. between Pacific and
Dean streets in Cobble
Hill, (718) 875-3677; www.bookcourt.org.)

FILM, "MICHAEL": Live piano
accompaniment by Donald
Soss. 5:17 p.m. Brook-
lyn Academy of Music (30
Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix
Street in Fort Greene, (718)
636-4100, www.bam.org.)

THEATER, "LA DIDONE": 8
p.m. See Sat. March 14.

SMALL BUSINESS SEMINAR:
Learn how to use online
social networking for your
business. Sponsored by
the Brooklyn Chamber of
Commerce. \$25 (free for
Chamber members). 8:30
p.m. Brooklyn Business
Solutions Center (9 Bond
St. between Fulton and
Livingson streets, 5th floor in
Downtown Brooklyn, (718)
875-1000 ext. 133; www.brooklyn.com.)

WED, MARCH 18
**SMALL BUSINESS WORK-
SHOP:** Learn how to assem-
ble an effective business
plan. Registration required.
Free. 10 a.m. Noon, N.Y.C.
College of Technology (25
Chapel St. at Jay Street,
11th floor, (718) 797-0187).

**MARKETING FOR SMALL
BUSINESSES:** CBA and
networking event spon-
sored by the Downtown
Women's Club. \$20 (\$15
members). 6 p.m. Down-
town Atlantic Restaurant
(364 Atlantic Ave. between
Hoyt and Bond streets in
Boerum Hill).

LEVENTY LECTURE SERIES:
St. Carole M. Eppers speaks
on spiritual topics. \$10. 7:30
p.m. Church of the Assump-
tion of the Blessed Virgin
Mary (55 Greenwich St.
between Hicks and Henry
streets in Brooklyn Heights,
718-625-1161).

**THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS
OF REB NACHMAN:**
Michael Zion speaks about
the Hasidic teacher. Free.
7:30 p.m. Union Temple of
Brooklyn (17 Eastern Pkwy.
between Plaza Street and
Underhill Avenue in Prospect
Heights, (718) 638-7600,
www.uniontemple.org.)

THEATER, "LA DIDONE": See
Tuesday, March 17.

THURS, MARCH 19
LIQUOR TRAINING SEMINAR:
State Liquor Authority hosts
seminar on alcoholic bever-
age control laws for restau-
rant and bar owners. Free.
9:30 a.m. 1 p.m. Brooklyn
Borough Hall (209 Jerusalem
St. at Court Street in Dow-
ntown Brooklyn, www.brooklyn.com.)

**MUSIC, "ORPHEUS AND
EURYDICE":** Brooklyn
Repertory Opera presents
Gluck's opera. \$20 (\$15
students and seniors). 7:30
p.m. Brooklyn Lyceum (227
Fourth Ave. at President
Street in Park Slope,
718-857-4816; www.brooklynlyceum.com.)

**THEATER, "THE HIGH
PRIESTESS OF DARK
ALLEY":** \$20. 8 p.m. See
Saturday, March 14.

THEATER, "TIMES 365:247":
See Thursday, March 18.

THEATER, "BUS STOP": 8 p.m.
See Saturday, March 14.

THEATER, "LA DIDONE": 8
p.m. See Tuesday, March 17.

**THEATER, "THE PRODU-
CERS":** Mel Brooks's classic
musical. \$25. 8 p.m. Poly
Prep Country Day School
(1710 Seventh Ave. at 72nd
Street in Bay Ridge, (718)
775-9090; jffilmfestival.com.)

MUSIC, DAVID LEISNER: Gui-
tarist. \$30 (\$20 students).
8 p.m. Bargemusic (Fulton
Ferry Landing, Old Fulton
Street at the East River in
DUMBO, (718) 624-2083;
www.bargemusic.org.)

SAT, MARCH 21
OUTDOORS AND TOURS
**INTRODUCTION TO BIRD-
WATCHING:** See Saturday,
March 14.

DISCOVERY TOUR: See Sat-
urday, March 14.

PERFORMANCE
THEATER, "BUS STOP": 2
p.m. and 8 p.m. See Saturday,
March 14.

**THEATER, "THE HIGH PRI-
ESTESS OF DARK ALLEY":** \$21.
3 p.m. and 8 p.m. See Sat-
urday, March 14.

SATURDAY JAZZ SERIES:
Hosted by Caley Biles.
Free. 3-6 p.m. Spike Hill
 Tavern (184 Bedford Ave. at
North Seventh Street in Wil-
lamsburg, (718) 718-7373;
www.spikehill.com.)

town Brooklyn, [www.abc-
state.ny.us](http://www.abc-
state.ny.us).)

FOOD FESTIVAL: Cooking
demonstrations, tastings,
kids activities and prize
drawings. Free. 10 a.m.-5
p.m. F. Martine (119 Court
St. at State Street in Brook-
lyn Heights, (718) 858-
6000; martine.com.)

FILM, "ORDET": \$11. 4:30 p.m.,
7 p.m., 9:30 p.m. Brook-
lyn Academy of Music (30
Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix
Street in Fort Greene, (718)
636-4100, www.bam.org.)

THEATER, "MS. JACKSON":
All-female improv group.
Free. 7 p.m. Brooklyn Public
Library's Central branch
Grand Army Plaza at East
ern Parkway in Park Slope,
718-230-2100.

READING, JOHN WRAY:
Author of "Lowboy." Free.
7 p.m. BookCourt (163
Court St. between Pacific and
Dean streets in Cobble
Hill, (718) 875-3677; www.bookcourt.org.)

**FILM, "THE BRIDE OF GLOM-
DOL":** Live piano accom-
paniment by Donald Soss.
\$11. 7 p.m. Brooklyn Acad-
emy of Music (30 Lafayette
Ave. near St. Felix Street
in Fort Greene, (718) 636-
4100, www.bam.org.)

**PANEL DISCUSSION ABOUT
GRAFFITI:** A conversation
between former police
officers and graffiti writers.
Free. 7 p.m. PowerHouse
Arena (37 Main St. at
Water Street in DUMBO,
718-666-3049; www.powerhousearena.com.)

JAZZ: Brian Woodfield Sextet
performs. \$10. 7 p.m. Brook-
lyn Music School Playhouse
(126 St. Felix St. in Fort
Greene, (718) 638-5640; www.brooklynmusic.org.)

THEATER, "TIMES 365:247":
A multi-media exploration
of today's hopes and fears.
\$10-\$18. 7 p.m. Brick
Theater (375
Metropolitan Ave. near Lor-
raine Street in Wil-
lamsburg, (718) 363-3101; www.bricktheater.org.)

**THEATER, "THE HIGH
PRIESTESS OF DARK
ALLEY":** \$20. 8 p.m. See Sat-
urday, March 14.

JAZZ: Abubakr Sissoko Inc. play
the music of Horace Silver.
\$20 (\$10 students). 8 p.m.
Bargemusic (Fulton Ferry
Landing, Old Fulton Street
at the East River in DUMBO,
718-624-2083; www.bargemusic.org.)

THEATER, "BUS STOP": 8 p.m.
See Saturday, March 14.

FOOD FESTIVAL: See Thurs-
day, March 19.

**FILM, "THE LONG, HOT
SUMMER WITH PAUL
NEWMAN":** \$11. 4:30 p.m.,
7 p.m., 9:30 p.m. Brook-
lyn Academy of Music (30
Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix
Street in Fort Greene, (718)
636-4100, www.bam.org.)

**THE SENECA PEACE EN-
CAMPMENT:** Alice O'Malley,
Estelle Coleman and
Laura Bonnell discuss the
activist women's peace
movement. Free. 7 p.m. 9
p.m. Lesbian History Ar-
chives (484 14th St. between
Eight Avenue and Prospect
Park West in Park Slope,
718-768-3953; www.lesbianhistoryarchives.org.)

**MUSIC, "ORPHEUS AND
EURYDICE":** Brooklyn
Repertory Opera presents
Gluck's opera. \$20 (\$15
students and seniors). 7:30
p.m. Brooklyn Lyceum (227
Fourth Ave. at President
Street in Park Slope,
718-857-4816; www.brooklynlyceum.com.)

**THEATER, "THE HIGH
PRIESTESS OF DARK
ALLEY":** \$20. 8 p.m. See
Saturday, March 14.

THEATER, "TIMES 365:247":
See Thursday, March 18.

THEATER, "BUS STOP": 8 p.m.
See Saturday, March 14.

THEATER, "LA DIDONE": 8
p.m. See Tuesday, March 17.

**THEATER, "THE PRODU-
CERS":** Mel Brooks's classic
musical. \$25. 8 p.m. Poly
Prep Country Day School
(1710 Seventh Ave. at 72nd
Street in Bay Ridge, (718)
775-9090; jffilmfestival.com.)

MUSIC, DAVID LEISNER: Gui-
tarist. \$30 (\$20 students).
8 p.m. Bargemusic (Fulton
Ferry Landing, Old Fulton
Street at the East River in
DUMBO, (718) 624-2083;
www.bargemusic.org.)

SAT, MARCH 21
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**INTRODUCTION TO BIRD-
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DISCOVERY TOUR: See Sat-
urday, March 14.

PERFORMANCE
THEATER, "BUS STOP": 2
p.m. and 8 p.m. See Saturday,
March 14.

**THEATER, "THE HIGH PRI-
ESTESS OF DARK ALLEY":** \$21.
3 p.m. and 8 p.m. See Sat-
urday, March 14.

SATURDAY JAZZ SERIES:
Hosted by Caley Biles.
Free. 3-6 p.m. Spike Hill
 Tavern (184 Bedford Ave. at
North Seventh Street in Wil-
lamsburg, (718) 718-7373;
www.spikehill.com.)

**MUSIC, "ORPHEUS AND
EURYDICE":** Brooklyn
Repertory Opera presents
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students and seniors). 7:30
p.m. Brooklyn Lyceum (227
Fourth Ave. at President
Street in Park Slope,
718-857-4816; www.brooklynlyceum.com.)

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Free. 3-6 p.m. Spike Hill
 Tavern (184 Bedford Ave. at
North Seventh Street in Wil-
lamsburg, (718) 718-7373;
www.spikehill.com.)

Reformed Church (18th Ave.
and 84th Street in Ben-
sonhurst, (718) 256-7173;
www.reformedchurch.org.)

THEATER, "TIMES 365:247":
See Thursday, March 18.

THEATER, "LA DIDONE": 8
p.m. See Tuesday, March 17.

**THEATER, "THE PRODU-
CERS":** 8 p.m. See Friday,
March 20.

CLASSICAL CONCERT: Works
by Mozart, Schumann and
Beethoven. \$40 (\$35 se-
niors, \$20 students). 8 p.m.
Bargemusic (Fulton Ferry
Landing, Old Fulton Street
at the East River in DUMBO,
718-624-2083; www.bargemusic.org.)

JAZZ: Harris Eisenstadt's
Woodblock Prints and Sean
Moran's Small Elephant.
\$10 suggested. 8 p.m.
and 10 p.m. Beam Music
Studio (168 Seventh St.
between Second and Third
avenues in Gowanus),
www.beambrooklyn.com.)

SALES AND MARKETS
WINTER ANTIQUES MARKET:
See Saturday, March 14.

OTHER
FOOD FESTIVAL: See Thurs-
day, March 19.

WATERSHED DISCUSSION:
Speakers discuss the dan-
gers posed by gas compa-
nies vying for drilling rights
in the city's watershed.
Free. 11 a.m. Brooklyn
Food Co-op (182 Union St.
between Sixth and Seventh
avenues in Park Slope, (718)
622-0560; foodcoop.org.)

THE O'MALLEY LEGACY:
Author Michael D'Antonio,
former Dodgers president
Peter O'Malley and re-
porter Richard Sandeman
speak about Brooklyn's
amateur team. Free. 1 p.m.
Brooklyn Historical Soci-
ety (108 Pierrepont St.
Clinton Street in Brooklyn
Heights, (718) 222-4111;
www.brooklynhistory.org.)

**TALK, "UNFINISHED BUSI-
NESS":** Panel discussion
on the goals of American
women. 2 p.m. Brooklyn
Museum (200 Eastern Pkwy.
at Washington Avenue in
Prospect Heights,
718-638-5000; www.brooklynmuseum.org.)

ART TALK: Artists from the
"Portraits: Painted and
Personal" exhibit discuss
their inspiration. Free.
6 p.m. Table Arts Gallery (224
18th St. between Second
and Third avenues in Sunset
Park, (718) 833-9100; www.tableartsgallery.com.)

ART OPENING: Photographs
by John Elder. Free. 3 p.m.
Henry Gregg Gallery (111
Front St. at Washington
Street in DUMBO, (718) 408-
1090; henrygregg.com.)

**FILM, "SLAP SHOT" WITH
PAUL NEWMAN:** \$11. 4:30
p.m., 7 p.m., 9:30 p.m. Brook-
lyn Academy of Music (30
Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix
Street in Fort Greene, (718)
636-4100, www.bam.org.)

PERFORMANCE ART: Jeremy
Slater and Tamara Yelton
present work. Free. 7 p.m.
Open Source Gallery (255
18th St. between Fifth and
Sixth avenues in Park Slope,
646-279-3960; www.open-source-gallery.org.)

SUN, MARCH 22
OUTDOORS AND TOURS
"WILDMAN" STEVE BIRD:
LEADS FORAGING TOUR.
\$15 (\$10 children). 11:45 a.m.
Grand Army Plaza entrance
to Prospect Park (Flatbush
Avenue at Union Street,
718-635-2153; www.natureville.org.)

**TOUR GREEN WOOD CEME-
TERY:** Led by Big Onion
Walking Tours. \$15 (\$12
students and seniors). 1
p.m. Green-Wood's main
entrance (Fifth Avenue
and 25th Street in Sunset
Park, (718) 499-3001; www.ligon.com.)

DISCOVERY TOUR: See Sat-
urday, March 14.

PERFORMANCE
DANCE, "DON JUAN": Con-
temporary ballet set to the
music of Greenwich. \$20.
\$30. 2 p.m. Brooklyn Center
for the Performing Arts at
Brooklyn College (2900
Campus Rd. at Hill Place
in Flatbush, (718) 951-4500;
www.brooklyncenteronline.org.)

THEATER, "BUS STOP": 3 p.m.
See Saturday, March 14.

**THEATER, "THE PRODU-
CERS":** 3 p.m. See Friday,
March 20.

CLASSICAL CONCERT: Works
by Mozart, Schumann and
Beethoven. \$40 (\$35 se-
niors, \$20 students). 3 p.m.
Bargemusic (Fulton Ferry
Landing, Old Fulton Street
at the East River in DUMBO,
718-624-2083; www.bargemusic.org.)

THEATER, "LA DIDONE": 8
p.m. See Tuesday, March 17.

SALES AND MARKETS
WINTER ANTIQUES MARKET:
See Saturday, March 14.

OTHER
FOOD FESTIVAL: See Thurs-
day, March 19.

**SOCIALISM AND SPIRITUAL-
ITY:** Lawrence Bull speaks.
Free. 11 a.m. Brooklyn So-
ciety for Ethical Culture (53
Prospect Park West at Sec-
ond Street in Park Slope,
718-768-9772; www.bsec.org.)

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE:
The annual Bay Ridge march
in honor of Ireland's patron
saint. Free. 1 p.m. Marine Av-
enue at Fourth Avenue.

**FILM, "SOMETIMES A GREAT
NOTION" WITH PAUL
NEWMAN:** \$11. 2 p.m., 4:30
p.m. Brooklyn Academy
of Music (30 Lafayette Ave.
near St. Felix Street in Fort
Greene, (718) 636-4100,
www.bam.org.)

LIST YOUR EVENT...

To list your event in Nine Days in Brooklyn, please give us two weeks notice or more. Send your listing by e-mail: calendar@brooklynpaper.com; or by mail: GO Brooklyn, The Brooklyn Paper, 55 Washington St., Suite 404, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Listings are free and printed on a space available basis. We regret we cannot take listings over the phone.

OUR OPINION

Stop DiBrienza now

Is there anything more unsightly than a politician with his hands in the public till?

The latest offender is former city Councilman Steve DiBrienza, who served 16 years until term limits — and subsequent failed run for public advocate — took him out of the public payroll.

Or did it?

This week, The Brooklyn Paper learned that DiBrienza still has a cozy relationship with his former colleagues, who have been happy to funnel money to this invisible public servant's charity — an astounding \$1.19 million over the past seven years.

The charity's principal expense? Salaries.

We don't know exactly how much went into DiBrienza's pocket because antiquated rules don't require identification of anyone earning less than \$50,000. But we do know this: over the years, federal tax records show that DiBrienza and his cronies have pocketed

A scandal underscores why former City Councilman Steve DiBrienza's candidacy for his old seat is so troubling.

hundreds of thousands of your cash. DiBrienza, who is running to win back his old seat now that his replacement, Councilman Bill DeBlasio, is seeking higher office, told The Brooklyn Paper this week that his "Neighborhood Assistance Corporation" runs sports leagues and anti-graffiti programs.

Problem is, the group's Fort Hamilton Parkway office — which is in space shared with DiBrienza's law firm and real-estate office — is almost always shuttered. Worse, no one other than DiBrienza would confirm that the group does what DiBrienza says it does. The athletic director at one of the schools that supposedly benefited from DiBrienza's largesse told The Brooklyn Paper

he hadn't seen the former councilman in years and certainly would have known if DiBrienza had done anything to justify the money that the Council has given him to spend as he sees fit.

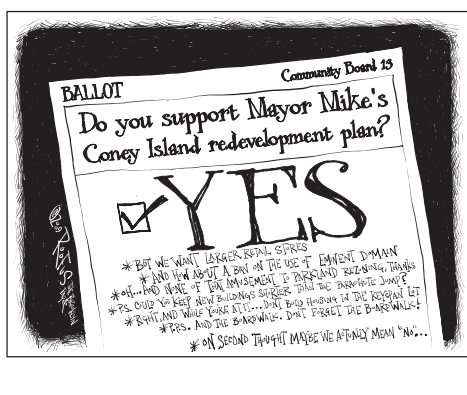
Councilman David Yankin (D-Brooklyn Heights), for example, requested \$15,000 for DiBrienza's group right after DiBrienza endorsed him for Congress in 2006.

Yankin told The Brooklyn Paper that this out-of-district donation to DiBrienza's group was not a kickback or a quid-pro-quo, but voters will certainly raise their eyebrows.

That appearance of impropriety is the core of why DiBrienza's candidacy for his old seat is so troubling. Here is a well-connected politician who is out of office, yet remains addicted to one of the central perks of holding office in this city: the hundreds of thousands of dollars of virtually unregulated cash that the Council doles out every year.

Voters in the 39th District do have a choice: they can reject Steve DiBrienza.

ALL DRAWN OUT



LETTERS

Steve? Please! Lander will never pander

To the editor,

Thanks for your article on the candidates forum held by the Windsor Terrace Alliance on Feb. 26 ("Steve schools 'em" March 7).

We are proud to be supporting Brad Lander for in the race, and believe that he was best at the job, and is best for the job.

Brad has the most consistent record of results for our community on the issues that matter to us — livable neighborhoods, affordable housing, public education. He has been working with us on the East Windsor rezoning, improving Park Circle, dealing with 21 Coton Pl., and helping the PS 154 PTA.

At the forum, he gave the only remarks that were not boilerplate campaign rhetoric, when he presented results from a survey of

over 300 community residents, identifying the issues that matter most in our neighborhood and that will drive his campaign.

Brad has the strongest support in Windsor Terrace, including the chairman of Community Board 7, the president of the PTA, PS 154, and many community leaders and residents. We believe that he was the best candidate at the forum, and the best candidate to represent us in the Council.

Randy Peers, Ryan Lynch, Channa Camine, June Reich, Deb Capone & Ellen Honigstock

The writers are all from Windsor Terrace. Peers is the chairman of Community Board 7.

Co-opted

To the editor,

Wow. As part of his rant about an alleged boycott of Israeli products, Michael Leventhal fumes: "Virtually all of the Park Slope Food Co-op members voted for Barack Hussein Obama" (letters, Feb. 28). Aside from wondering exactly how Mr. Leventhal came by this information (we still live in a secret ballot, don't we?), I might inform him that the majority of the country voted for Barack Hussein Obama, despite numerous chatter attempts to portray him as a terrorist sympathizer.

One final word of advice to the self-appointed apologists for Israel on your letters page: if one is accusing others of prejudice, it's kind of counterproductive to blatantly display one's own bigotry. The crude anti-Arab statements will merely add to an already confounding problem.

Ray Albieri, Cobble Hill

To the editor,

Everyone is entitled to his opinion. But when an argument like Leventhal's is supported through nasty divisive remarks, all credibility is lost. I found his remark about the Co-op's membership — "15,000 lonely angry women and feminized males" — particularly offensive.

It seems to me that Michael Leventhal is the "Rush Limbaugh" of Park Slope.

Terrence J. Allen, Prospect Heights

'Park' talk

Your article and editorial regarding Marianna Koval's resignation from her position at the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy indicate ignorance of the history of the park plan's gestation ("Koval quits 'Park'" and "Koval's departure," March 7).

For 10 years, Marianna Koval has worked tirelessly for Brooklyn Bridge Park and the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy.

With \$231 million committed, \$150 million already invested or under contract, site demolition

complete, park construction underway on Pier 1 and the first new section of park slated to open in late 2009, Brooklyn Bridge Park is hardly "virtually dead."

David Kramer, Brooklyn Heights

The writer is chairman of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy.

He's the 'Man'

To the editor,

While we all acknowledge the significance of an African American being elected president, I take great offense to my categorization as "The Black Man" in your article about how Brooklyn responded to the historic inauguration of President Obama ("Hope! Obama inspires Brooklyn," Jan. 24).

We live in dark economic times. Just last week, our nation's unemployment rose to 8.1 percent, the highest it has been in over 25 years.

A key component of preserving Brooklyn during these bleak economic times is creating more affordable places for people to live.

That is why I am pleased that Toll Brothers will get the public assistance it needs to deliver 130 units of much-needed affordable housing to Brooklyn ("DeBlasio backs the Brothers," March 7).

The project has already been determined to be eligible for the 42(a)

property tax abatement by the city Department of Housing Preservation and Development — subject to the provision of the required affordable housing within the development.

Toll Brothers and L&M Development Partners therefore have a strong incentive to obtain the subsidies needed to provide the affordable apartments, as the 42(a) tax abatement is a critical component of the project's financing.

Without this tax abatement, the project's economic viability is greatly affected. In addition, this project can only be built to the proposed densities if the affordable units are indeed built at the same time as the market-rate units. If Toll Brothers does not build the affordable housing units, the floor area ratio of their project would be reduced by 33 percent.

Realize that market conditions are presently in flux, but the public subsidies that allow for the construction of affordable housing of for developers strong incentives to build the affordable housing. I have no reason to believe that Toll would jeopardize their project in this way.

The entire project's viability relies profoundly on the success of its affordable housing subsidies.

Bill DeBlasio, Park Slope

The writer is a member of the City Council

What was so remarkable and telling of America's progress is that race was never a focal point in the 2008 election.

Your paper's minimization of the importance of this political milestone to mere issues of race is divisive and counterproductive.

Sidney Cherubin, Carroll Gardens

Editor's note: We certainly did not aim to minimize the milestone. Our story was an attempt to allow a cross-section of Brooklynites to reflect on the historic inauguration. Each participant was given a label, but the goal was to give voice to a diverse group of people — not to stigmatize.

Bill ♥ Toll

To the editor,

We live in dark economic times. Just last week, our nation's unemployment rose to 8.1 percent, the highest it has been in over 25 years.

A key component of preserving Brooklyn during these bleak economic times is creating more affordable places for people to live.

That is why I am pleased that Toll Brothers will get the public assistance it needs to deliver 130 units of much-needed affordable housing to Brooklyn ("DeBlasio backs the Brothers," March 7).

The project has already been determined to be eligible for the 42(a)

property tax abatement by the city Department of Housing Preservation and Development — subject to the provision of the required affordable housing within the development.

Toll Brothers and L&M Development Partners therefore have a strong incentive to obtain the subsidies needed to provide the affordable apartments, as the 42(a) tax abatement is a critical component of the project's financing.

Without this tax abatement, the project's economic viability is greatly affected. In addition, this project can only be built to the proposed densities if the affordable units are indeed built at the same time as the market-rate units. If Toll Brothers does not build the affordable housing units, the floor area ratio of their project would be reduced by 33 percent.

Realize that market conditions are presently in flux, but the public subsidies that allow for the construction of affordable housing of for developers strong incentives to build the affordable housing. I have no reason to believe that Toll would jeopardize their project in this way.

The entire project's viability relies profoundly on the success of its affordable housing subsidies.

Bill DeBlasio, Park Slope

The writer is a member of the City Council

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Cong. B'nai Avraham - 117 Remsen Street (bet Clinton & Henry St)

Blessed is the Match: The Life and Times of Hannah Senesh (2009)
Director: Roberta Grossman
85 minutes

Sunday March 22 7pm

Orthodox Stance
Director: Jason Hutt
80 minutes

Sunday April 5 7pm

HAG: The Story of the Hassidic Actors' Guild
Director: Yisrael Lifschutz
90 minutes

Sunday March 29 7pm

Admission: \$5
Reservation Requested / Walk-ins Welcome
Contact: Festival curator Simcha Weinstein (718) 596 4840 ext.15
Email: rabbi@pratt.edu www.bnaiavraham.com

The interview you are just dying to read!

Bobby Paolillo thought he saw it all as an NYPD sergeant — then he got caught at Green-Wood Cemetery. The 50-year-old chief of security works hard to make sure that nearly naked sunbathers, totally naked porn stars and witchcraft practitioners — who are all dying to get into the 171-year-old cemetery — don't disturb the iconic graveyard. We first

CHECKIN' IN WITH...

got obsessed with Paolillo's work 20 years ago, when we did that seminal story about the guy who sneak into the famed boneyard at night, strip down naked, and take pictures of themselves. We also love the idea that the dead need protection from such behavior. So this week, Paolillo talked with still-alive reporter Ben Muesig.

Ben Muesig: Why does Green-Wood Cemetery need to have security anyway?
Bobby Paolillo: Green-Wood is open to the public, which means that there have to be some things at the police department, because the police department doesn't patrol it. We prevent vandalism and theft. We help out when there are car accidents or when people get lost or sick in the cemetery.

BM: How do you stop vandalism and theft?
BP: That's what we do by our presence. We try to deter things by stopping everybody who comes into the cemetery by asking them a couple of questions.

BM: Like what? "Pardon me sir, why are you carrying this shovel?"
BP: No, no. We don't really have too much of a vandalism problem or a larceny problem at all. We stay on top of things. We have 24-hour patrol, we have K-9 patrol. We have other systems that we use. Altogether, we try to prevent anything bad from happening.

BM: So you've never seen someone come in with a shovel?
BP: No, no, never. I've been there a year and a half and I've never seen that.

BM: Other than visitors for funerals and mourners, who else comes to the cemetery?
BP: You name it, we have it in the cemetery. We have bird lovers, we have history buffs, Civil War buffs. We try to accommodate them. There are even some older people who are into foraging for nuts and mushrooms.

BM: Do you have a problem with people breaking the rules?
BP: No, no, never. I've been there a year and a half and I've never seen that.

BM: What are some of the other things you've caught people doing?
BP: Making movies. We don't allow any video recording in the cemetery without permission — and you can imagine the type of movies we've found people making.

BM: Actually, I can't. What kind of movies?
BP: Sometimes it's the type of movies that wouldn't be allowed in movie theaters. I've come across some that don't seem like G-rated movies.

BM: What do you do then? Shoo them along and tell them to get up, get dressed, and get out?
BP: One incident was like that. I told them to get up and get out. I had to be a little loud. My voice came out. It got into a little bit of a shouting contest, but they left. People will try to get away with whatever they can get away with.

BM: Like what?
BP: Like sunbathing in a graveyard, in a swimsuit.

BM: What did you say to the cops?
BP: "Please put your clothes on and leave."

BM: Any other rule breakers take advantage of the cemetery?
BP: Bicyclists. You're not allowed to ride your bike around the cemetery, but sometimes we have these bicyclists who ride here and walk their bikes into the cemetery. That's all well and good, but the second you turn your back, they're riding all over the place.

BM: Which is scarier: walking the mean streets of Brooklyn as a cop or working in a graveyard as a security guard?
BP: I'm not afraid of the dead people — it's the live ones that are a problem.

ON GUARD: Bobby Paolillo runs the security operation at Green-Wood Cemetery. The dead may know Brooklyn, but this guy knows the dead.

McMahon and Barack

They served nothing but tap water, and he didn't get to ask his prepared questions, but freshman Rep. Mike McMahon enjoyed his first official visit to the White House on Tuesday afternoon.

McMahon met with President Obama in the ceremonial East Room — along with the 60 or so fellow members of the centrist New Democratic Caucus — to discuss the president's budget plan.

"I went away very impressed with his presentation and the presentations by his staff," McMahon told The Brooklyn Paper as part of his weekly "McMahon on Line" call.

"The president described himself as a New Democrat and said his goal was to grow the economy and small business in the short term, yet tackle the deficit in the longer term," McMahon said.

The congressman, who took office in January and has already been named the whip of the freshman Democrats and submitted his first bill, brought readers of The Brooklyn Paper into the room for the 3:30 pm meeting with the president.

"First of all, it's such a great thrill to enter the White House from the 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue entrance," he said. "And the East Room, I know from taking a White House tour once, is where Teddy Roosevelt's kids used to ride ponies."

"We were all seated at a large square table," McMahon added. "The president came in, we all stood up, and he sat down with [top adviser] David Axelrod, [Chief of Staff] Rahm Emanuel, [economic adviser] Larry Summers and [legislative affairs director] Phil Shiro."

"The president's presentation was thoughtful and very knowledgeable about the facts — more so than his staff, even," McMahon continued. "But he also has a great, respectful humor with his staff. Summers looked very tired and the president noted it and said he's been working hard these last few weeks, and everyone laughed."

"The first-term congressman said he hasn't found reason to oppose the president so far," McMahon said. "He really is coming from the center," McMahon said.

Then again, McMahon did have two pointed questions ready for the president, though he didn't get the chance.

"The first was that commercial real estate market is the next shoe to drop, so I wanted to know what they will do. And second, I wanted to remind the president that even though there have been bad actors in the financial markets, it remains a positive industry for New York and we need to solve the problems without throwing the baby out with the bathwater."

Earlier in the week, McMahon got on Line 1 to tell us about his first bill, which is officially called the "Veterans Mental Health Screening and Assessment Act," or HR 1308. Its main provision calls for all returning soldiers to participate in mandatory — and confidential — one-to-one suicide and post-traumatic stress screenings with licensed mental health professionals.

Given that the Army just reported the highest level of suicides, it's hard to imagine that Congress needs to pass a bill to

Spoken like a freshman whip.

No' Coney — mo' problems

Full board wants changes in Bloomy plan

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Coney Island's community board called on Wednesday night for Mayor Bloomberg to radically remake his controversial plan for the People's Playground with concessions to its primary critic: the amusement area's main landowner, Joe Sitt.

Technically, Community Board 13 voted to approve the mayor's sweeping rezoning plan that calls for a new city-owned theme park between the Cyclone roller coaster and the in-league baseball stadium, complemented by 15 acres of privately owned hotels, restaurants and year-round concessions, like an indoor water park.

But the board backed on 20 amendments, demanding far larger retail stores, a ban on the use of eminent domain, and a rejection of a key part

of the mayor's scheme, the rezoning of some of Coney's amusement zone to parkland.

The amendments, which are only advisory, are more compatible with Sitt's vision for the faded amusement area.

Following the heated vote in Coney Island Hospital on Ocean Parkway, the mayor's office said a mixed statement applauding the board's vote on one of Bloomberg's signature development projects, but indicating the board's amendments will be ignored.

"While input from the Community Board will not doubt strengthen the plan throughout the process, some of the recommendations made are counter to the plan's goals, such as doing without the rezoning of parkland, which would prevent the amusement district from being permanent and re-

DIBRIENZA SLUSH FUND...

Continued from page 1

graffiti drives.

When reached by The Brooklyn Paper, DiBrienza said his group sponsored soccer, basketball and softball teams at three Catholic schools in Windsor Terrace and Park Slope.

But a sports director at one of the schools said he hadn't heard of DiBrienza's group or seen DiBrienza in years.

"I know all the sponsors," said the athletic director. "DiBrienza has helped in the past, but I couldn't tell you the last time."

Neighborhood activists also said they have barely heard of DiBrienza's group or seen it in action.

"I respect the work he did when he was a council person, but to be honest, I haven't seen him around the community in eight years," said Randy Paris, the chairman of Community Board 13, who also supports DiBrienza's rival Brad Lander.

DiBrienza's non-profit is small. Its annual budget has ranged from \$100,000 to \$209,825 — almost all of it from the Council grant and almost all of it spent on salaries to its executive director and others who are not required to be identified because they draw pay of less than \$50,000.

Executive Director Gail Buccio, who worked for DiBrienza in the Council, was paid \$54,000 plus benefits for 2007, the last year for which records are available.

Two other employees, including DiBrienza, pulled in \$83,262. DiBrienza said that he made \$30,000 "at most," but he must have made more or else the salary earner's name would have passed the \$50,000 threshold, making his or her name available in city records.

But salaried employees have included DiBrienza's wife and other former staffers, including Josephine Beckmann, now district manager of Community Board 10. Bay Ridge's Beckmann did not return a call.

The city Department of Youth and Cultural Development has audited the organization and reported "no significant findings."

Buccio said that 155 students participated in Neighborhood Assistance Corporation sports leagues at schools like Holy Name of Jesus on Prospect Park West, and Immaculate Heart of Mary on Fort Hamilton Parkway so far this year. She also said there

earned tax dollars support organizations that provide legitimate services," said Josh Shaller, a Park Slope resident and club member of the Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats. "I was saddened to read that the City Council has been giving Mr. DiBrienza so many dollars for so many years with so little transparency and accountability, raising so many questions."

Questions have also arisen about the connections between the city money and DiBrienza's role in a congressional election. In 2006, Rep. Major Owens retired, setting off a five-way Democratic primary that included four councilmembers.

David Yasky (D-Brooklyn Heights) and Yvette Clarke

stemmed from last year's slush fund scandal.

DiBrienza ended up endorsing Yasky in the race.

Follow the money

Steve DiBrienza says his Neighborhood Assistance Corporation runs youth programs in Windsor Terrace and Park Slope. There's no explicit evidence of that from the group's annual tax filings — but plenty of detail about how the group has benefited DiBrienza and his cronies. —Source: Federal tax filings

Year	Total budget	Salaries & benefits
2007	\$204,678	\$137,262
2006	\$209,825	\$158,734
2005	\$184,547	\$141,736
2004	\$174,996	\$128,411
2003	\$175,226	\$134,172

DiBrienza's Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of office, which shares space with his law office and his real-estate company, is rarely open.

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Abe gets his day

By Aisha Gavard
for The Brooklyn Paper

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



The first line of the Emancipation Proclamation.

possessed one because the copy is kept out of view to protect Lincoln's John Hancock from light.

But the relief of history buffs and Lincoln enthusiasts everywhere, the museum is working on remedying this. "We're working to get our archival documents online," said Scott Weber, "Right now, the only way to find out what we have is to e-mail me or visit the museum. This copy is one of many exciting things we have that we want to make

more visible to the public." The copy will be rolled out to coincide with a viewing by historian Matthew Pinsker, author of "Lincoln's Sanctuary: Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers' Home." After that, back to the obscurity of the archives it lives.

Pinsker, reading and viewing of the Emancipation Proclamation, March 19, 7 pm at the Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierpont.

Stumptown Coffee's new Red Hook roasting plant, and a kitchen that churns out hot foods like pizza and macaroni and cheese.

But will it work? After all, the beauty of the corner bo-

dega is the lower prices that come from offering non-gourmet goods. An old-schoolodega would not succeed if its customers are prepared to pay more for the fancier foods.

"It's supply and demand," said Vernice Reyes, who works at the Kaffe Deli on

Remsen Street in Downtown, where the most high-end item is a bag of chips labeled "gourmet."

"People want gourmet products, they just don't want to pay for it," she said. "The Brooklyn Standard Deli (188 Nassau Ave. at Jewel Street in Greenpoint, (718) 472-2150) opens on April 1.

"Enfolding 280 Hours" will be on display from March 27-July 5 at the Brooklyn Museum (2000 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 638-5000). Kwak's other work is at Chh Contemporary Fine Art Gallery (125 Grand St. at Roebling Street in Williamsburg, (718) 218-8939).

There's more to the piece than just putting down dots. Kwak, who began in early February, uses computer models and drawings as a guide. "It will give museum visitors an experience they've never had before — they can walk through and see what a transformative power an everyday material like masking tape can have on the space."

Brooklyn Museum curator. "It will give museum visitors an experience they've never had before — they can walk through and see what a transformative power an everyday material like masking tape can have on the space."

Brooklyn Museum curator. "It will give museum visitors an experience they've never had before — they can walk through and see what a transformative power an everyday material like masking tape can have on the space."



Picture of the week!

Really! They asked us to print this!

The Brooklyn Paper

Our friends at the City Council press office sent us this photo to highlight a new fundraising campaign for the cast-stopped Brooklyn Public Library — but we couldn't help but highlight something else.

Boy, aren't the pots on the left leaving a GREAT time!

Now, kidding aside, the Brooklyn Public Library's three-month, "Support our Shelves" initiative is about as worthy a cause as any in these tough times.

And the politicians on the left — Councilman Domenico Recchia, Borough President Markowitz and Brooklyn Public Library board chairman Anthony Cirielli — all said the right thing last Thursday.

But, guys, if you're being photographed at an event to champion the library, at least look like you're having a good time — reading is supposed to be fun, isn't it?

Damn, even the guy in the painting—the lead Council Speaker Christine Quinn looks pissed off!

DOGGERS...

Continued from page 1

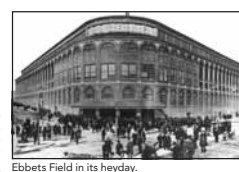
distant D'Antonio's reasoning, but refuse to let such notorious egotist off the hook.

"I don't see any reason to blame him 100 percent. But he didn't do us any favors either," said Tom Gilbert, a baseball historian.

"Baseball was mostly in the northeast in the 1930s. You had all these attractive unopened markets out there in the south and west. This enabled baseball clubs to threaten to move unless cities built them a stadium [so they] were sucking cities into giving them something for free."

Brooklyn refused to play ball, forcing O'Malley's hand, the book's argument goes. Clearly, this one will need extra innings to settle.

But Peter O'Malley may also face harsh questioning about why the Los Angeles version of the Dodgers had such



Ebbets Field in its heyday.

an arm's-length relationship with the team's birthplace. With the wound from the Dodgers' departure still oozing, the younger O'Malley was still cursing Brooklynites as recently as 1993 when he used a Bay Ridge bar called "the Brooklyn Dodger" for — yes, believe it — copy-right infringement.

A judge threw out the case in

1993. Yeah, great, but where was that jurist in 1957 when the Dodgers' departure still oozing, the younger O'Malley was still cursing Brooklynites as recently as 1993 when he used a Bay Ridge bar called "the Brooklyn Dodger" for — yes, believe it — copy-right infringement.

A judge threw out the case in

BRONX...

Continued from page 1

Ferre had two deputies that were not from the Bronx.

MM: How do you do that work?

EB: I drive. On a good day it takes about 25 minutes.

MM: So you're a driver.

East River tells are a hot-button issue for everyone.

MM: What do you think of them?

EB: It's a controversial subject. On the one hand, the MTA needs revenue to maintain the

current level of activity. I don't relish the thought of having to pay tolls to cross the East River... but the MTA must be interested in adding tolls, especially since Atlantic Yards was supposed to be the new Ebbets Field. There's a lot of issues [like] traffic. I'm not sure the environmental impact statement adequately addresses the traffic concerns.

MM: What about the East River tolls?

EB: The scale might be a little too large. Putting a Midtown-sized development in the

middle of residential low-rise Brooklyn will be a permanent change to the community.

MM: With such comments, you could pick up ever run in Brooklyn.

EB: [Laughs] I have no intention of running against Marty. Marty has been a friend for years.

MM: OK, let's stop dancing around Brooklyn — which is better?

EB: It's like having two children, you never choose between them.

MM: Sophie did.

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